THE BIBLE AND HELLENISM

GREEK INFLUENCE ON JEWISH AND EARLY CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

EDITED BY
THOMAS L. THOMPSON
AND PHILIPPE WAJDENBAUM

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Abbreviations

ADPV	Abhandlungen des deutschen Palästina-Vereins
AfO	Archiv für Orientforschung
AGAJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und Urchristentums
AION	*Annali dell'Università degli Studi di Napoli 'L'Orientale'*
AJA	*American Journal of Archaeology*
ANRW	Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt
ANYAS	Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
BA	*Biblical Archaeologist*
BAR	*Biblical Archaeological Review*
BASOR	*Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*
BHS	Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
CBQMS	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly* Monograph Series
CIJ	J. B. Frey, *Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaicarum*, 2 vols (Rome, 1936–52)
CIS	Copenhagen International Seminar
CRINT	Compendium rerum iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum
DBAT	*Dielheimer Blätter zum Alten Testament*
DBS	*Daily Bible Study*
DJD	Discoveries in the Judaean Desert
DSS	Dead Sea Scrolls
DTT	*Dansk Teologisk Tidsskrift*
EB	Etudes bibliques
FBE	Forum for bibelsk eksegese
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Kultur des alten und neuen Testaments
GLAJJ	M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, 3 vols (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1970)
GRBS	*Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*
HUCA	*Hebrew Union College Annual*
IEJ	*Israel Exploration Journal*
IOSOT	International Organization for the Study of Old Testament
JANES	*Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Studies*
JAOS	*Journal of the American Oriental Society*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JCS	*Journal of Cuneiform Studies*

JEA	*Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*
JHS	*The Journal of Hebrew Scriptures*
JJS	*Journal of Jewish Studies*
JNES	*Journal of Near Eastern Studies*
JSJSup	Journal for the Study of Judaism Supplements
JSOT	*Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplements
JSRC	Jerusalem Studies in Religion and Culture
LAI	Library of Ancient Israel
LHB/OTS	Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies
LSJ	Liddell–Scott–Jones *Greek–English Lexicon*
LXX	Septuagint
MT	Masoretic Text
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version of the Bible
OBO	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensa Analecta
OTP	J. Charlesworth (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2 vols (New York: Doubleday, 1983)
RB	*Revue Biblique*
SAP	Sheffield Academic Press
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLSymp	Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series
SBTh	Studies in Biblical Theology
SFSHJ	South Florida Studies on the History of Judaism
SJOT	*Scandinavian Journal for the Old Testament*
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
TSAJ	Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
VTSup	Vetus Testamentum Supplements
WO	*Die Welt des Orients*
ZAW	*Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*
ZDMG	*Zeitschrift des Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*

Introduction
Making room for Japheth

Thomas L. Thompson and Philippe Wajdenbaum

> May God make room for Japheth, and let him live in the tents of Shem.
> (Gen. 9:27)

In Genesis 9, after the Flood, Noah got drunk. When he awoke from his drunkenness, he cursed his son Ham who had seen him naked and told his brothers, but blessed Japheth and Shem, who had covered their father's nakedness with a blanket. Noah's blessing for Japheth prophesies that he will dwell in the tents of his brother Shem. In Genesis 10, the genealogies of Noah's three sons are detailed. We learn that Japheth was an ancestor of the Greeks, who were named Yavan (Gen. 10:2-5). Shem was an ancestor of the peoples of the Near East, such as Eber (Gen. 10:24-5), who was himself an ancestor of Abram the Hebrew (Gen. 11:26). Among the descendants of Yavan, Kittim is mentioned (Gen. 10:4), which is the subject of a prophecy by Balaam: 'But ships shall come from Kittim, and shall afflict Ashur and Eber, and he also shall perish forever' (Num. 24:24).

These two prophecies by Noah and Balaam, both in the Pentateuch, are cast into a distant future, when Japheth's descendants will invade the Fertile Crescent in fleets from Cyprus (Heb. *kittim* = Kittion). Together, Genesis and Numbers clearly point to the conquest over Southeast Asia by Alexander and his Macedonians in 333–323 BCE. Few have identified this historical reference, perhaps due to the traditionally early dating of Pentateuchal sources.[1]

Nevertheless, the prophecies of both Noah and Balaam clearly imply a post-conquest context in the Hellenistic era, when Greeks (descendants of Japheth) were indeed in the tents of Shem.[2] It was in the 1970s that the patriarchal narratives and biblical origin stories from the patriarchs to the United Monarchy

1. Niels Peter Lemche, 'The Old Testament – a Hellenistic Book?', *Did Moses Speak Attic? – Jewish Historiography and Scripture in the Hellenistic Period*, L. L. Grabbe (ed.), Journal for the Study of Old Testament Supplement Series, 317 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 287–318.
2. 'May God make room for Japheth in the Tents of Shem' became proverbial for the Hellenistic era in rabbinic literature. Pieter W. van der Horst surveys the influence of

were first shown to be unhistorical,[3] and Bernd Diebner first suggested that the Hebrew Bible as a whole had been a Hellenistic project.[4] Containing minimal historical information, the Hebrew Bible offered a 'mythic past', allegorically structured for theological and philosophical purposes.[5] When John Van Seters argued in 1983 for a strong similarity in theme and patterns between the Primary History of the so-called 'Deuteronomistic history' and the *Histories* of Herodotus, emphasizing that both works were written in prose (unlike ancient Near Eastern literature),[6] he complained of a resistance against any approach that might suggest a link between the Bible and Greek texts.[7] Moreover, unlike his study on Abraham in 1975, Van Seters's understanding of the Deuteronomistic tradition of Joshua–Kings rejected any significant role for oral tradition behind the biblical texts.[8] Philip R. Davies, arguing for an understanding of biblical 'history' as literary fiction, written somewhere between the Persian and Hasmonean eras, demonstrated that 'ancient Israel', as portrayed by biblical scholars, was a theological construct with little resemblance to the historical kingdoms of Israel and Judah or, indeed, to the literary construct of 'biblical Israel'.[9] In 1992, Niels Peter Lemche opened a heated debate (which is still engaged today) with the suggestion that, as there is no knowledge of the existence of the Bible before the Dead Sea Scrolls, we should consider the possibility of the Hellenistic period as a *terminus ad quem* for the Hebrew Bible.[10]

Hellenic culture on Jewish during the Hellenistic and Roman eras in *Japheth in the Tents of Shem – Studies on Jewish Hellenism in Antiquity* (Leuven: Peeters, 2002).

3. T. L. Thompson, *The Historicity of the Patriarchal Narratives: The Quest for the Historical Abraham*, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, 133 (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1974); J. Van Seters, *Abraham in History and Tradition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1975); J. H. Hayes & J. M. Miller (eds), *Israelite and Judean History* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1977); D. Gunn, *The Story of King David* (Sheffield: SAP, 1978).
4. See Diebner's many essays in the *Dielheimer Blätter des alten Testaments*, beginning with its first number: B. Diebner & H. Schult, 'Argumenta e Silentio: Das Grosse Schweigen als Folge der Frühdatierung der "alten Pentateuchquellen" ', *DBAT* 1 (1975).
5. T. L. Thompson, *The Mythic Past: Biblical Archaeology and the Myth of Israel* (New York: Basic Books, 1999) = *The Bible in History: How Writers Create a Past* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1999).
6. John Van Seters, *In Search of History: Historiography in the Ancient World and the Origins of Biblical History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1983). See page 17 and those following.
7. *Ibid.*, 8.
8. In his 1975 study of oral tradition, Van Seters closely followed H. Gunkel and H. Gressmann, and was much inclined to the theory of an oral tradition, pre-existing the first literary traditions of Gen. See J. Van Seters, *Abraham in History and Tradition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1975), part 2; for a rebuttal, see T. L. Thompson, 'A New Attempt to Date the Patriarchal Narratives', *JAOS* 98 (1978), 76–84; *idem*, *The Origin Tradition of Ancient Israel* (Sheffield: SAP, 1987), 41–59.
9. Philip R. Davies, *In Search Of Ancient Israel* (Sheffield: SAP, 1992).
10. N. P. Lemche, 'Det gamle Testamente som en hellenistisk bog', *Dansk Teologisk Tidsskrift* 55 (1992), 81–101; E. Nielsen, 'En hellenistisk bog?', *DTT* 55 (1992),

The Book of Daniel is commonly dated to the late Hellenistic era, because of the prophecies it contains about the defeat of the Persian Empire at the hands of the Macedonians (identified as the Greeks, named Yavan, as in Genesis: Dan. 8:21; 10:20; 11:2), and the later disputes between the Lagids and the Seleucids (Dan. 11). Since the prophecies in Daniel are so accurate, most scholars conclude that they were written after the facts, or *ex eventu*. Hence these retrospective prophecies provide a *terminus a quo* for the redaction of the Book of Daniel in the second century BCE.[11] We may consider that the prophecies of Noah and Balaam in Genesis and Numbers, respectively, provide a similar *terminus a quo*, since they also refer to the conquests of Alexander. However, even if the Book of Daniel is commonly dated to the late Hellenistic era, Paul Niskanen has noticed that scholars had never considered that this book might bear some influence from Greek literature.[12] Niskanen demonstrates that the notion of the succession of world empires in the dream of Nebuchadnezzar seems to be borrowed from Greek historiography, as found in Herodotus, Ctesias and Polybius (but Niskanen thinks that Daniel pre-dates Polybius). Hence, a biblical book that is dated to the Hellenistic era has long been thought devoid of any Greek influence.

There are two other books from the Hebrew Bible that scholars usually attribute to the Hellenistic era, whereas the religious tradition claims that they were penned by Solomon himself: Ecclesiastes and the Song of Songs. In these cases, scholars have compared the philosophical motifs from Ecclesiastes, and related them to several Greek doctrines such as stoicism, Epicureanism and scepticism.[13] The Song of Songs is believed to be a Hellenistic production, because of its similarities with Greek erotic poetry and the occurrence of at least one Greek loanword. It is thought that its author might have borrowed some motifs directly from Theocritus' *Idylls*.[14] Thus, in the case of Ecclesiastes and

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161–74; F. Willesen, 'Om fantomet David', *DTT* 56 (1993), 249–65; N. P. Lemche, 'The Old Testament – a Hellenistic Book?', *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* 7(1) (1993), 163–93; *idem*, 'Det gamle Testamente, David og hellenismen', *DTT* 57 (1994), 20–39; *idem*, *The Israelites in History and Tradition*, Library of Ancient Israel (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 159–60; T. L. Thompson, *The Bible in History: How Writers Create A Past* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1999); Grabbe, *Did Moses Speak Attic?*

11. It is commonly held that the author of Dan. did not know the Maccabean revolt, an argument which allows a *terminus ad quem* for Dan. in 165 or 164 BCE; this date hardly allows that the *Kittim* in Dan. refers to the Romans. See E. Nodet, 'Les Kittim, les Romains et Daniel', *Revue Biblique* 118(2) (2011), 260–68.
12. P. Niskanen, *The Human and the Divine in History – Herodotus and the Book of Daniel*, Journal for the Study of Old Testament Supplement Series, 396 (London: T&T Clark, 2004).
13. See R. N. Whybray, *Ecclesiastes* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1989, 1997). Whybray dates the book from the mid-third century BCE (19), but doubts Greek influence (51–5).
14. A. C. Hagedorn, 'Of Foxes and Vineyards: Greek Perspectives on the Song of Songs', *VT*, 53(3) (2003), 337–52; J. B. Burton, 'Themes of Female Desire and Self-Assertion

Song of Songs, a majority of biblical scholars accept that these two books were written by authors who were (at least partially) Hellenized. Such comparative argument, however, is rarely applied to biblical books thought to be older, and the idea of the entire Hebrew Bible as a Hellenistic book continues to be unacceptable to most biblical scholars. Some have relied on archaeology to support the historicity of biblical narratives;[15] others do not understand biblical narrative as entirely historical[16] and allow that some parts were written in the Persian and Hellenistic eras.

Such late dating has bolstered new studies, comparing biblical with Greek classical texts. The discovery of Sumerian and Akkadian texts in the mid-nineteenth century has provided us with the most ancient written versions of the *Enuma Elish* and the story of the Flood, both clearly reiterated in Genesis 1–10.[17] Moreover, the Hammurabi Code displays significant parallels with the so-called Covenant Code (Exod. 20–23), and the tale of Sargon's birth is reiterated with striking detail in that of Moses (Exod. 2).[18] However, the laws of Exodus 20–23 could also be closely paralleled to Plato's *Nomoi* and the birth tale of Moses to that of Oedipus. The Old Babylonian parallels to biblical narrative generated an excessive trend of placing the origins of biblical literature in Babylon, whereas the greatest part of biblical law and narrative displayed little resemblance to the earliest texts from Mesopotamia, but reflected a much wider spectrum of ancient literature, such as that of Ugarit, Egypt, Hatti, the later traditions of the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian periods as well as Greek literature; not least Homer and Herodotus.[19] Recently, Russell E. Gmirkin has argued that

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in the Song of Songs and Hellenistic Poetry', *Perspectives on the Song of Songs*, A. C. Hagedorn (ed.) (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2005), 180–205.

15. William G. Dever, *What Did the Biblical Writers Know and How Did They Know It? What Archaeology Can Tell Us About the Past of Ancient Israel* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2001).
16. Israel Finkelstein & Neil Asher Silberman, *The Bible Unearthed, Archaeology's New Vision of Ancient Israel and the Origin of Sacred Texts* (New York: Free Press, 2001); cf. T. L. Thompson, 'Methods and Results: A Review of Two Recent Publications', *JSOT* 15(2) (2001), 306–25.
17. Van Seters, *In Search of History*, 21, identifies *Gilgamesh* as a prototype of Homer's *Odyssey* and the *Enuma Elish* of Hesiod's *Theogony*.
18. D. Irvin & T. L. Thompson, 'The Joseph and Moses Narratives', *Israelite and Judean History*, Hayes & Miller, 181–209.
19. Such ancient Near Eastern literature is easily accessed in a great number of standard anthologies today, among which are: H. Gressmann (ed.), *Altorientalische Texte zum alten Testament* (Berlin: Toppelman, 1926); J. B. Pritchard (ed.), *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Related to the Old Testament* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969); W. W. Hallo & K. L. Younger (eds), *The Context of Scripture*, 3 vols (Leiden: Brill, 1997–2003); and the multi-volume, genre-oriented series of anthologies published since 1990 by the Society of Biblical Literature under the title *Writings From the Ancient World.* On the influence of ancient Near Eastern thought and literature on classical Greek, as well as Greek and Jewish thought of the Hellenistic period, see the very important series of articles in J. M. Sasson (ed.), *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East,* vol. I, part I:

the Mesopotamian influence on Genesis 1–11 was drawn from the Hellenized Babylonian priest Berossus. Whereas the closeness of the parallels – especially between Atrahasis and Genesis 6–8 – are such that general theories of diffusion have only limited explanatory power, Berossus' *Babyloniaca*, written in Greek in the late fourth century BCE, is a far better candidate as the Bible's source of inspiration than either oral tradition or Old Babylonian cuneiform texts. Thus, Gmirkin places the Pentateuch in the early third century BCE.[20]

The earliest comparisons between Greek and biblical literatures are found in apologetic writings of ancient Hellenized Jews, such as Aristobulus, Philo of Alexandria and Josephus Flavius, as well as Christians such as Clement of Alexandria, Origen and Eusebius. All were well aware of narratives and laws that were similar in both Greek texts and the Bible. All were also aware of the similarities of Plato's doctrine concerning the divine and the ideal State and the Pentateuch. Whether Jews or Christians, they assumed that Moses and the prophets lived long before Plato and most Greek writers. Accordingly, there was little question that the Greeks reused the stories and philosophy of the Bible. 'Theft by the Greeks' was a charge developed by Josephus in *Against Apion*, and this was expanded by the Church Fathers for apologetic purposes. They argued that the Jews had received direct revelation from the one true god, whereas the Greeks had maintained an idolatrous religion, with immoral fables about many gods. With Philo and Josephus, they argued that Plato was an exception among the superstitious Greeks. Through philosophy and reason, Plato held a notion of the divine similar to that found in the Bible.[21] With few followers in the Greek world, however, Plato's philosophy was a mere beginning, whereas Moses and the prophets had raised a holy nation and a perfect state governed with divine laws.[22] Eusebius did notice that the state in Plato's *Nomoi* was much like biblical Israel. Plato, the greatest of philosophers, imitated Moses.[23] As Christianity, once recognized, became the state's religion, Justinian closed the debate together with the Academy in Athens, as the philosophers were reduced to silence.

In modern scholarship, such debates have often been judged irrelevant, under the assumption that both parties had supported arguments for their own doctrines on what were merely vague resemblances. Plato is not thought to have borrowed anything from the Bible. The emergence of his thought is usually traced to so-called pre-Socratic philosophers, as well as Homer, Herodotus and

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"The Ancient Near East in Western Thought" (New York: Simon & Schuster Macmillan, 1995), 3–120.

20. R. E. Gmirkin, *Berossus and Genesis, Manetho and Exodus: Hellenistic Histories and the Date of the Pentateuch,* Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 433; Copenhagen International Seminar, 15 (London: T&T Clark, 2006).
21. Josephus Flavius, *Against Apion*, II 167–8; on the similarity of Plato's ideal State with biblical Israel, see II 222–4; on Plato's imitation of Moses, see II 257, 280–81; on the reproach of Plato's worship of idols, see Origen's *Against Celsus* V 43; VI 17; on Origen's claim of the Bible's independence, see *Against Celsus*, VI 19; VII 30.
22. Origen, *Against Celsus* V 43.
23. Eusebius of Caesarea, *Preparation for the Gospel*, XII 52:35.

Euripides, which Plato, indeed, cited. Similarly, Old Testament scholars rarely pay attention to the Church Fathers. This dismissal of the traditional debate over priority coincided with the nineteenth-century dominance of higher criticism in Germany. In the eighteenth century, however, the supersessionist arguments of both Josephus and the Church Fathers had influenced scholarship considerably, as, for instance, in Bishop Dom Calmet's *Dictionnaire historique et critique de la Bible* (1722–28), which listed biblical figures in alphabetic order, and offered comparisons with Greek heroes and gods, supporting the claim that mythic classical texts were dependent on historical biblical tradition. For instance, Samson was historical, which the mythical story of Heracles reiterated. Most of the dictionary's comparisons can be traced to Clement, Origen and Eusebius. Radical scepticism towards church traditions also influenced eighteenth-century thought. Voltaire's popular parody of Calmet, *Dictionnaire philosophique portatif* (1764), insistently mocked the early Christian claims.[24] The parody concluded with an argument that directly inverted Calmet's: the Old Testament was a world made of Greek myths translated into Hebrew.[25] Voltaire's critique closed the issue, as nineteenth-century scholarship turned towards internal analysis in its search for origins: a development which, in its turn, would eventually give place to the immense discoveries of ancient Near Eastern texts, supporting the influence of archaeology and its discoveries in both biblical and classical studies of the 1920s and 1930s, finally dominating the field in the wake of World War II and shifting historicity's pendulum towards a historical Bible and Homer.[26]

Archaeological discoveries of Early West Semitic and Hittite texts have, however, allowed scholars to compare the common literary ground between Europe and Syria–Palestine already from the Bronze Age, not least in regard to mythic development and implications for early religion. Most notable have been the rich archives from Ugarit in Syria and Khattusha in Anatolia.[27] These

24. Voltaire, *Dictionnaire philosophique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1994). Voltaire often cites Origen and Eusebius. See the articles 'Genèse', 281–95, 'Fables', 262–3, 'Job', 332–6. In the article 'Salomon', 464–74, Voltaire claimed that not only the books attributed to Solomon (Eccl. and the Song of Songs) had been written in Alexandria during the Hellenistic era, but many other biblical books as well.
25. Voltaire, *Dictionnaire philosophique*, article 'Abraham', 44.
26. The development of Old Testament scholarship and the debates of the past seventy years, let alone a comparable development in the classical field, goes far beyond the interests of this volume. For one perspective on a much debated topic up to 1990, see T. L. Thompson, *The Early History of the Israelite People From the Written and Archaeological Sources* (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 1–126. For developments since 1990, see *idem*, 'Changing Perspectives on the History of Palestine', *Biblical Narratives and Palestine's History: Changing Perspectives 2* (London: Acumen, 2013), 305–42.
27. On the texts from Ugarit, see A. Caquot & M. Sznycer, *Ugaritic Religion. Iconography of Religions, Section XV: Mesopotamia and the Near East; Fascicle 8* (Leiden: Brill, 1980); J. C. De Moor, *An Anthology of Religious Texts from Ugarit* (Leiden: Brill, 1987); S. B. Parker, *The Pre-Biblical Narrative Tradition*, SBL Resource for Biblical Study, 24 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1989); N. Wyatt, *Religious Texts from Ugarit: the Worlds of Ilimilku and his Colleagues*, The Biblical Seminar, 53 (Sheffield: SAP, 2002). For those

texts have brought considerable support and refinement to the theories of the mid-twentieth century that had understood that the Greek archaic period writers, Homer, Hesiod and the earliest biblical writers, had drawn from a shared background since the Bronze Age. This, however, did not support the early theory of Cyrus Gordon and Michael Astour that early Greek mythology had West Semitic origins.[28] That is more than we can know. Indeed, both the Bible and the Greek archaic literature are first-millennium refractions of a linguistic tradition that had a common heritage from the Bronze Age. Today, new approaches are needed.

Relying on a comparative analysis of existing and verifiable texts, Thomas Brodie has recently suggested that we consider Homer as a direct source for Genesis,[29] and argues that its many repetitions are not the result of careless editing of sources with similar narratives. They function rather as diptychs: reiterated narratives, which mirror each other with thematic purpose. While this argument finds support in John Van Seters's claim that the purported 'editors' for a 'Deuteronomistic history' are part of an obsolete construct, which had been modelled on seventeenth-century Homeric scholarship,[30] Brodie reverses Van Seters's understanding of Herodotus as dependent on the 'Deuteronomist', and would clearly prefer Flemming Nielsen's preference for Herodotus' priority.[31] Also Jan-Wim Wesselius, inspired by Flemming Nielsen's research,[32]

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texts from Khattusha, see H. Hoffner, *Hittite Myths*, 2nd edn (Atlanta, GA: SBL, 1998); *idem*, *The Laws of the Hittites: A Critical Edition*, Documenta Et Monumenta Orientis Antiqui, 23 (Leiden: Brill, 1997).

28. See the works of C. Gordon, *Before the Bible: The Common Background of Greek and Hebrew Civilisations* (London: Collins, 1962); M. Astour, *Hellenosemitica* (Leiden: Brill, 1965); Martin L. West, *The East Face of Helicon – West Asiatic Elements in Greek Poetry and Myth* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997); John Pairman Brown, *Israel and Hellas*, BZAW, Bd. 231 (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1995).
29. Thomas L. Brodie, *Genesis as Dialogue: A Literary, Historical and Theological Commentary* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001). Brodie supports, with Wesselius and Wajdenbaum (see below), that a single writer wrote Gen.–Kgs (71–2). On Homer as a direct source for Gen., see *ibid*, 447–94.
30. J. Van Seters, *The Edited Bible: The Curious History of the 'Editor' in Biblical Criticism* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006).
31. Van Seters, *In Search of History*, is unequivocal in his argument that Herodotus was the later text and dependent on Van Seter's 'Deuteronomist'. On Nielsen's misunderstanding of Van Seters, see I. Hjelm, *Jerusalem's Rise to Sovereignty: Zion and Gerizim in Competition*, CIS, 14 (London: T&T Clark, 2004), esp. 20–22, with reference to F. A. J. Nielsen, *The Tragedy in History, Herodotus and the Deuteronomistic History*, CIS, 4 (Sheffield: SAP, 1997), 14–15; 89–90; 163.
32. Nielsen, *The Tragedy in History*. See also S. Mandell & D. N. Freedman, *The Relationship Between Herodotus' History and Primary History* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1993); for an alternative understanding of biblical narrative as theological and mythic allegory, see T. L. Thompson, 'Why Talk about the Past? The Bible, Epic and Historiography', 'Historiography in the Pentateuch: Twenty-Five Years After Historicity' and 'Kingship and the Wrath of God: or Teaching Humility', *Biblical Narrative and Palestine's History*, 147–62, 163–82 and 205–34, respectively.

understands the biblical tradition to be dependent on Herodotus in both content and technique.[33] For example, the conquest of Canaan is likened to Xerxes' march on Greece, denoting a victory, which also ultimately failed. Like Van Seters, Wesselius also suggests that repetitive (though contradictory) biblical narratives with similar plots do not mark an editor of disparate sources, but rather are a stereotypical technique of a single author,[34] closely akin to Herodotus' use of reiteration. What formerly seemed redundant now appears intentional, creating the appearance of a summary collection of a rich variety of sources.[35]

Several scholars have suggested that biblical and Homeric parallels were far too numerous and detailed to be merely examples of literary diffusion.[36] Bruce Louden has argued that the pantheon of Homer reflects origins in West-Semitic (e.g. Athena from Anath).[37] Nevertheless, the Hebrew Bible (not to mention the New Testament)[38] has in its turn borrowed from both the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.[39] The *Iliad*'s shared motifs appear notably in the Prophets, lamenting the fall of Jerusalem, much as Trojans foretell the fate of Ilion. Battle scenes in Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings display patterns found in the *Iliad*. The *Odyssey*'s theme of the *nostos* – the journey abroad and the return home – structures the narratives from Jacob to Joshua. Similarly, the *Odyssey*'s *theoxeny* – the welcoming of a god in the guise of a human – not only occurs several times in Genesis (18–19),[40] but is itself the object of caricature in Judges 13. Odysseus' return to Ithaca also finds a home in the story of Joseph (Gen. 37–50), reiterating parallel motifs to structure pivotal turns of the narrative (*Odyssey* XIV–XXIV). Both heroes interpret dreams, both test their loved ones and both hide their identity from their families to await a dramatic moment of revelation. It is noteworthy that Louden, like Wesselius, concludes his analysis with an observation on the neglect that such comparison has received from scholarship, both biblical

33. Jan-Wim Wesselius, *The Origin of the History of Israel: Herodotus' Histories as Blueprint for the First Books of the Bible*, JSOTS 345 (Londonk: SAP, 2002), 72.
34. See also the discussion of the three-fold wife-sister and shepherd-conflict episodes of Gen. 12, 20 and 26 in T. L. Thompson, 'A New Attempt to Date the Patriarchal Narratives', *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 98 (1978), 20–27.
35. A similar alternative to source theory had been offered for Exod.: T. L. Thompson, 'Some Exegetical and Theological Implications of Understanding Exodus as a Collected Tradition', *Fra Dybet: Festskrift til John Strange*, Forum for bibelsk eksegese, 5, N. P. Lemche & M. Müller (eds) (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum, 1994), 233–42.
36. See, however, Chapter 5.
37. B. Louden, *The Iliad, Structure, Myth, and Meaning* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006).
38. See D. R. MacDonald, *The Homeric Epics and the Gospel of Mark* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000).
39. B. Louden, *Homer's* Odyssey *and the Near East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).
40. See further, J. Taylor, *Classics and the Bible: Hospitality and Recognition* (London: Duckworth, 2007).

and classical.[41] Louden supposes that in antiquity, the Homeric epics journeyed widely, notably in relationship to trade, and it seems likely to him that the Bible has borrowed such motifs and structures from Homer.[42]

Łukasz Niesiołowski-Spanò has shown that many motifs in the so-called 'primeval history' (Gen. 1–11) echo Plato. The creation narrative can be likened to Plato's *Timaeus*, the notion of human breath is comparable to Plato's notion of the soul in *Phaedo* and *Phaedrus*, and the separating from the primordial human being into two of different sexes has similarities with the *Symposium*.[43] Niesiołowski-Spanò goes on to suggest that the Genesis narrative is a Hellenistic reiteration of Plato, the Platonic influence providing a simpler and thus more scientific explanation of origin.[44] He argues that this narrative, or perhaps Genesis as a whole, post-dates a *Torah*, which comprises legislative books from the Persian era. On the other hand, it has been noted by scholars, such as Moshe Weinfeld and Yaakov Kupitz[45] (and previously by Eusebius, *Preparation for the Gospel*, XII), that Plato's Ideal State bears a striking resemblance to biblical Israel: both are founded on land conquered by force, and divided by lottery to twelve tribes, each subdivided into paternal families; each family receiving its plot of land for cultivation, transmitted from father to son. If that father had only daughters, such daughters would need to marry men from their own tribe so that the land – which also could not be sold – would remain within the same tribes, forever.[46]

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41. Wesselius, *The Origin of the History of Israel*: 'It is in a way amazing that its dependence on Herodotus has never been noticed before, as it is in a way so evident that it proves almost impossible to ignore it once one becomes aware of it' (100).
42. Louden, *Homer's* Odyssey *and the Near East*: 'When we consider which language, Greek or Hebrew, had the greater number of speakers, which culture, Greek or Israelite, was spread over a larger area, which people, by virtue of its maritime facility, was in contact with a greater number of other peoples, the odds grow far greater that Greek culture would have exerted its influence, direct or indirect, on Israelite culture, rather than vice versa' (321). T. L. Brodie has reached similar conclusions (*Genesis as Dialogue*, 472–81).
43. Ł. Niesiołowski-Spanò, 'Primeval History in the Persian Period?' *Scandinavian Journal of Old Testament*, 12(21) (2007), 106–26; see also Ł. Niesiołowski-Spanò, *Origin Myths and Holy Places in the Old Testament: A Study of Aetiological Narratives*, Copenhagen International Seminar (London: Equinox, 2011).
44. Niesiołowski-Spanò, 'Primeval History?', 122.
45. M. Weinfeld, *The Promise of the Land, The Inheritance of the Land of Canaan by the Israelites* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993), 22–4. Yaakov S. Kupitz, 'La Bible est-elle un plagiat?', *Science et Avenir*, hors-série no. 86 (1997), 85–8. See also A. C. Hagedorn, *Between Moses and Plato – Individual and Society in Deuteronomy and Ancient Greek Law* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004). Hagedorn states that there was a common background to Greek and Hebrew law, and does not discuss questions of possible borrowings (*ibid*., 38).
46. Compare Lev. 25:13-17, Num. 26, 27 and 36, with Plato, *Laws*, 741 b–c for the prohibition of selling the plots of land, and 745 b–c for the division by lottery through twelve tribes, and 924 c–e for the *epiclerate*, the wedding of the inheriting daughter in her own tribe.

Suggesting that Homer, Herodotus and Plato were sources for the Bible, Philippe Wajdenbaum has built an argument on some fifty laws that are common to both Plato and the Pentateuch, at times presented in the same order; as in the so-called 'covenant code' (Exod. 20–23), others in Leviticus and Numbers, and Deuteronomy 12–26.[47] As Plato's *Laws* have no narratives, but are discussed by three protagonists in a dialogue, Wajdenbaum suggested the possibility that Plato's text may have been the framework used by biblical authors in creating the biblical Israel and many of its secular laws, the specifically religious laws finding no Greek equivalents. Indeed, Plato himself had suggested that the founder of his would-be State use mythology in an effort to persuade the people of such laws' divine origin and perfection. The legislator as poet should use stories to illustrate how obedience is rewarded by God and how disobedience is punished.[48]

Wajdenbaum's analysis fits well the observations of numerous parallels between biblical and classical literature, which encouraged him to conclude that the Pentateuch and Joshua may have reused the framework and laws from Plato's *Laws*, as well as moral precepts from *The Republic*. In the conquest narrative, twelve-tribe Israel is created after a plan Moses received from Yahweh. A series of tales from Exodus to Kings reiterate how Israel, which should have been perfect and hence eternal, failed to obey Yahweh. They would choose their own land even before they entered the Promised Land; they would have local gods and be like other nations; they would have their own king (Deut. 17:15), a head taller than his neighbour; David would build Yahweh a house![49] Saul would not wait and made his own decisions (1 Sam. 15), David, the rich man, took the one thing Uriah had (2 Sam. 11), and Solomon murdered his own brother (1 Kgs 2:23-5) and collected horses, women and gold (1 Kgs 10:28–11:10, in contradiction to Deut. 17:16-17). Such a mythic and philosophical framework is also found in Plato's *Critias*, in the story of Atlantis, in which a divinely founded society should likewise have been perfect and eternal. The first ten kings of its ten tribes made a covenant to obey its divine laws.[50] Yet, with the passage of generations, its kings too grew more and more unfaithful. Zeus, like Yahweh with Israel and Judah, destroyed Atlantis. The ancient debate of Jewish and Christian writers comparing Platonic and biblical ideas and texts resurfaces again. One might well surmise that the modern field of biblical studies was indeed a reaction against the radical criticism of the Enlightenment's efforts to provide a new model for the origins of the Bible.[51]

47. Philippe Wajdenbaum, *Argonauts of the Desert: Structural Analysis of the Hebrew Bible*, Copenhagen International Seminar (Sheffield: Equinox, 2011).
48. Plato, *Laws*, 817 a–d.
49. Compare Samuel's warning of the dangers of kingship in 1 Sam. 8:11-18 with Theseus' speech against tyranny in Euripides, *The Suppliants*, 430–60.
50. Plato, *Critias*, 119 d–120 c. Compare with Exod. 24:1-11. In both cases, the assembly swears to respect the divine laws forever, engaging their offspring. Bulls or oxen are sacrificed and their blood is dashed on the assembly.
51. Roland Boer, 'The German Pestilence: Re-assessing Feuerbach, Strauss and Bauer', '*Is This Not the Carpenter?*': *The Question of the Historicity of the Figure of Jesus*,

Current biblical and classical scholarship has reached a turning point where, on the one hand, a dating of the Hebrew Bible to the Persian and Hellenistic eras grows increasingly likely, and, on the other hand, a number of biblical and classical scholars have begun to observe that the influence of Greek literature on the composition of the Hebrew Bible becomes increasingly clear. However, Niels Peter Lemche, who has been at the forefront of support for a Hellenistic dating of the Hebrew Bible, has also warned scholars against the temptation of a 'Panhellenism'.[52] Such religious practices as the Sabbath, circumcision and the specific alimentary prohibitions of Leviticus are not found in ancient Greek practices, and may thus be considered as original to Samaritan and Judean custom. Moreover, the observation that the Hebrew Bible reused many mythical and legislative themes of Greek literature does not alter its similar dependencies on ancient Near Eastern literature, not least in relationship to royal ideology.[53] The sophistication of biblical reiteration of Greek literature is well compared to that of Hellenistic and Roman epics, such as Apollonius of Rhodes' *Argonautica* or Virgil's *Aeneid* – both multiplying, in almost every verse, references to Homer and other Greek authors.[54] If, indeed, the authors of the Hebrew Bible had their part in a Hellenistic literary milieu, they were familiar with such baroque techniques of writing. Reiterating yet more ancient authors – Homer being the most prestigious one – was not a form of 'plagiarism', which is a modern, anachronistic notion. Quite the contrary; it is the hallmark of literary craftsmanship.[55] The way the biblical authors appropriated Greek tradition, and transformed it into allegorical epic, parallels the way Roman authors, such as Virgil, drew on Greek literature.[56]

This book offers a collection of essays comparing the Hebrew and Greek Bibles with the Greek classics, as well as methodological discussions of the historical conditions under which Greek literature may have influenced Jewish and early Christian writings. These essays are collected in three parts. The first part, 'A Mediterranean or Ancient Near Eastern Context?', consists of discussions of methodology regarding a Persian or Hellenistic dating of biblical tradition and the implications of such a dating. The second part, 'Greek-Jew or Jew-Greek?',[57]

Thomas L. Thompson & Thomas S. Verenna (eds), CIS (Sheffield: Equinox, 2012), 33–56.

52. Niels Peter Lemche, 'Does the Idea of the Old Testament as a Hellenistic Book Prevent Source Criticism of the Pentateuch?', *Scandinavian Journal of Old Testament*, 25(1) (2011), 75–92.
53. T. L. Thompson, *The Messiah Myth: The Ancient Near Eastern Roots of Jesus and David* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2005). On the status of such traditions in the Hellenistic period, see R. Gmirkin, *Berossus and Genesis.*
54. On this literary technique in the third century in Alexandria, see Virginia Knight, *The Renewal of Epic. Responses to Homer in the Argonautica of Apollonius* (Leiden: Brill, 1995).
55. See Brodie, *Genesis as Dialogue*, 426–7.
56. Lemche, *The Israelites in History and Tradition*, 119; Wesselius, *The Origins of the History of Israel*, 63–6.
57. This expression originally comes from James Joyce, *Ulysses* (London: Bodley Head, 1960), 622, and was coined by Robert P. Carroll, 'Jewgreek Greekjew: The Hebrew Bible

consists of comparative studies of specific books or chapters of the Hebrew Bible. The third part, 'Fleets from Kittim (Numbers 24:24): Roman-era Texts', gathers contributions related to Roman era texts, such as 1–2 Maccabees, the Dead Sea Scrolls, Josephus and the New Testament.

In the first chapter of Part I, Emanuel Pfoh addresses questions related to the historical and cultural contexts in which literary influence and dependence of biblical stories may have occurred. A historical and cultural epistemology is employed, when one interprets the biblical narrative in hopes of understanding how such stories depict reality, past and present, in ancient and modern interpretive contexts, respectively. He then attempts to construct a historical context for producing stories, in order to provide potential intentions and functions for their existence. Finally, Pfoh relates such influence and dependence to a broad cultural background from Mesopotamia to the Mediterranean, during the second half of the first millennium BCE, while giving special emphasis to the spread of Hellenism in the Levant. Pfoh compares how Roman authors appropriated Greek literary tradition with the way biblical authors may have done the same.

Étienne Nodet argues that the recent discovery of a large Israelite–Samaritan shrine on Mount Gerizim has significant consequences of challenging a Jewish bias in biblical studies. After assessing biblical hints at the importance of Shechem, Nodet opens the question of why the Samaritan Bible is so short, containing only the Pentateuch, along with a *Chronicle* of little authority, and beginning with a short variant of Joshua, poorly preserved, but akin to the version of Joshua that Josephus used. Nodet then asks how we are to explain the huge difference in the ideologies of Ezra, Nehemiah and 1 Maccabbees, whose views are strictly legal and national, and the Prophets as a whole, including 'post-exilic' layers, where the general mindset is both ethical and eschatological. Finally, Nodet points out that the common view held by Jews since (at least) the writings of the priest Aristobulus, in the second century BCE, and later by early Christian writers, was that the Greek philosophers (especially Plato) borrowed from Moses. Nodet suggests that an answer to all such problems is, first of all, that no biblical editing had ever been done in Babylonia. Second, the final shape of most of the Hebrew Bible was given at the library of Alexandria, in two major steps: the Pentateuch in the third century BCE and the Prophets and Writings in the second century BCE after the final split between Samaritans (= Shechem in the biblical allegory) and Jews, which occurred first after the Maccabean crisis. The main sources used by Nodet in this survey, besides Josephus, are Ben Sira and the *Letter of Aristeas*.

Russell E. Gmirkin discusses how the Hebrew Bible relates events, earlier or contemporary to the rise of classical Greek culture. Having previously argued that the Pentateuch was written around 270 BCE, using Greek sources from the Library of Alexandria, he also responds to Lester Grabbe's critique of his Hellenistic dating on the strength of the alleged testimony of Hecataeus of Abdera (late

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is All Greek to Me. Reflections on the Problematics of Dating the Origins of the Bible in Relation to Contemporary Discussions of Biblical Historiography', Grabbe, *Did Moses Speak Attic?*, 91–107.

fourth century BCE), quoted by Diodorus Siculus. Gmirkin attempts to show both that this testimony cannot be attributed to Hecataeus and is not evidence for a pre-Hellenistic dating of the Hebrew Bible. He concludes that understanding the Hebrew Bible as an ancient text, drawing primarily from Near Eastern influences, as Grabbe does, is not a valid position, and that the evident Greek influence on the Bible, as witnessed by comparative analysis, should now be accepted.

Łukasz Niesiołowski-Spanò, in Chapter 4, suggests a new way of understanding oriental influence on Aegean literature. Although an assertion of Near Eastern influence on the Aegean is dominant in much scholarship, there are numerous indications of a change in this perspective, which does not deny such influence, but suggests a reciprocal cultural transmission from West to East. Niesiołowski-Spanò takes up the role of Philistines, who had originally settled in Palestine as refugees from the Mycenaean world, to point out possible media, forms and time of transmitting traces of 'Aegean' elements in the religious traditions of Palestine.

Thomas Thompson closes Part I with a discussion on narrative reiteration, in a comparative literary analysis, to point out some of the difficulties related to assertions of borrowing and dependency in ancient literature. Primarily using his previous analyses of birth stories, testimonies of the good king and the poor-man's song, he concentrates on the problematic flexibility of literary transmission and diffusion. Taking his starting point in an acceptance that chronological priority, coupled with judgments of uniqueness of the elements shared between two texts, as well as explicit or implicit citations of an earlier text do support judgments of dependency, the cultural-wide developments of stereotypical narrative motifs, epithets, plot-lines, themes, narrative structures and episode patterns, as well as scene and tale types, typically create a complex narrative rhetoric, the recognition of which precludes most judgments of direct literary dependence or borrowing related to concrete examples of such reiterations.

Opening Part II, Yaakov Kupitz discusses how the English scholar Zacharias Bogan, in his book *Homerus Hebraizon* (Oxford, 1658), noticed the striking similarity between the scene of the young Rebecca, a pitcher of water on her shoulder (Gen. 24:15), going to meet Eliezer, who had come as a stranger seeking a bride for Isaac, with that of Athena meeting Odysseus in the guise of a young maiden, also carrying her pitcher of water (Hom. *Od.* 7.19–20), who takes him to meet the family of his potential bride-to-be, Nausicaa. This 'fingerprint' is but one of many complex similarities between two highly romantic texts. Kupitz points out these similarities, analyses them and tries to follow the trend of associations of the author of Genesis 24, who, Kupitz thinks, without a doubt, used Homer (*Od*. 6–7) as a source. He also analyses two other occurrences in the Pentateuch of a man meeting a woman at a well, namely Jacob meeting with Rachel (Gen. 29) and Moses with Zipporah (Exod. 2). Both can be compared similarly with the meeting of Odysseus and Nausicaa.

Philippe Guillaume follows with a wide range of comparisons of characters in Judges with Greek heroes, most notably from Hesiod's myth of the races in *Works and Days*. He first reviews references for the period of the Judges from Ben Sira, Ruth, Samuel, Kings, Nehemiah and Psalms, as well as texts from Eupolemus and Demetrius the Chronographer. Guillaume reviews Hesiod's

myth of the metallic races, representing different declining stages of humankind. Between the Bronze Age and Iron Age was the age of heroes, with its demi-gods and terrible wars. He reviews how the notion of the 'heroic age' was a reference for authors such as Herodotus, Thucydides and Plato, and suggests that this may also have influenced the Book of Judges. Special attention is given to the figure of Othniel, the first Judge as a transition from the period of Joshua and Caleb, which can be compared to Hesiod's Bronze Age. Further, Guillaume compares the tribe of Dan with the Greek myth of the Danaids. The abduction of women as the cause of a war that put an end to the heroic age appears in Judges 19–21, as well as in the Trojan epic, leading Guillaume to conclude that Judges may have emulated Herodotus and Thucydides in creating an age of heroes that might mirror contemporary conflicts like the Hasmonean wars.

In Chapter 8, Anne Katrine de Hemmer Gudme proposes a comparison of the episode of the rape of the Levite's concubine by the men of Gibeah, and the subsequent war of Israel's tribes against Benjamin, with the foundation myth of the abduction of the Sabines by the Romans, known notably from Livy and Plutarch. The motif of the dismemberment of the concubine is reminiscent of the myth of Osiris, known widely from ancient Egyptian to Hellenistic sources and Plutarch. Gudme raises the question of a shared context between Egyptians, Jews and Romans, resulting in stories showing similar patterns.

Flemming Nielsen compares Greek and biblical traditions of heroes. Solon unifies functions that biblical texts ascribe to Solomon and Moses, respectively. Like Solomon, Solon was a poet, and fragments of his poetry have been transmitted by classical and later authors. On the other hand, Solon was a lawgiver, and can be compared to Moses. The motif of the forgiveness of debts, for which Solon was famous, is reminiscent of the books of Ezra–Nehemiah.

Part III gathers contributions about biblical and para-biblical texts from the Roman era. Philippe Wajdenbaum compares 1 Maccabees to Polybius. Scholars have noticed that historical information about the Seleucids, the Lagids and Rome displayed in 1 and 2 Maccabees, as well as in chapter 11 of the Book of Daniel, often seems to be confirmed by Polybius' *Histories*. 1 Maccabees and Polybius both tell of the stories of the Seleucid kings and their weakening in the face of the rising power of Rome as the new ruler of the Mediterranean. In his contribution, Wajdenbaum compares common narratives and other details in Polybius and 1 Maccabees. As the Books of the Maccabees were likely written in the late Hellenistic or early Roman era, this study raises the question of whether Polybius might have been used as a source for historical information by 1 Maccabees.

Reinhard G. Kratz (Chapter 11) addresses the relationship between the Dead Sea scroll commentaries (*pesharim*) on Prophets and Psalms and Hellenistic commentaries on pagan authors. The chapter focuses on the *Pesher Nahum* and Greek commentaries on Aristophanes, and it provides a comparison of formal aspects, interpretation techniques and content, as well as the hermeneutic concept behind two types of commentaries. Kratz concludes that the method of philological interpretation of Alexandrian provenance must be taken into account in explaining the Qumran *pesharim*.

Ingrid Hjelm's contribution discusses the status of Greek authors in Josephus' *Against Apion*. Hjelm surveys how Josephus considered Greek authors to be less reliable than Eastern authors, such as the Chaldeans, the Phoenicians and the Jews. As the Jews faced accusations of being a recent religion, Josephus opposed the arguments of such authors as Apion, by claiming the high antiquity of the Jewish nation and its institutions. In this perspective, Josephus claimed that the Greek authors and philosophers had borrowed many of their notions from the Jews.

John Taylor explores, once again, themes outlined in chapters 1 and 4 of *Classics and the Bible: Hospitality and Recognition*. He focuses particularly on similarities between the *Odyssey* and Mark, Luke and John, though without attempting to demonstrate a direct debt. The function of recognition scenes in both biblical and Greek literature is also considered, as Taylor shows how stories in both traditions function as theological and literary parables or metaphors.

In Chapter 14, Bruce Louden discusses striking parallels between Hesiod's *Theogony* and the Book of Revelation. Revelation, the youngest book of the New Testament, employs motifs found in some of the oldest surviving myths. Though common in Near Eastern myths, the motifs are also central to Hesiod's *Theogony*. A heavenly choir ceaselessly sings praises of the Sky Father. Both choirs are associated with a similar formula (what is, what was, what will be). An immortal being waits to devour the immortal offspring of a 'goddess', who safely gives birth and takes refuge in a place prepared for her. The special child and future ruler over all is whisked away to safety. A war breaks out in heaven, between two groups of immortals. The defeated group is imprisoned in the underworld, and a dragon, who wants to rule the universe, is defeated, and also imprisoned in the underworld. Earth is personified, and acts as an agent. According to Louden, the *Theogony* unexpectedly provides a context for interpreting and understanding aspects of Revelation. Using Hesiod's poem as a lens to engage Revelation not only reaffirms its own significance, but also extends its scope to subject areas with which it is rarely associated. Christian myth uses some of the same genres of myth to depict Jesus and his reign, much as Hesiod used Zeus. Louden suggests that the authors of Revelation were aware of Hesiod's *Theogony* and, in some instances, saw themselves as 'correcting' it.

The fourteen contributions gathered in this volume all agree that Hellenic culture influenced, directly or indirectly, the Hebrew Bible and later texts such as the Apocrypha, the Dead Sea Scrolls' *Pesharim*, Josephus and the New Testament. Although each chapter offers a unique understanding of how Hellenic influences permeated the Near East, we are in general agreement that most of the books known as 'the Bible' were written when 'God made room for Japheth in the tents of Shem' – that is, at a time when the influence of Hellenism was likely to have reached Samaritans and Jews. Japheth, known in Genesis as the son of Noah and the ancestor of the Greeks, is known in the Greek tradition as Iapetos, the father of Prometheus, himself the father of Deucalion, who had survived the great Flood in the Greeks' version of the myth. Among Deucalion's descendants was one named Ion: biblical Yavan. Our title indeed implies not only that the Hebrew Bible was written in a Hellenistic context, but that the authors of Genesis had made room for Hesiod's *Theogony*.

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A Mediterranean or ancient Near Eastern context?

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Ancient historiography, biblical stories and Hellenism

Emanuel Pfoh

A prelude on the cultural and intellectual contexts of reading the Bible

It is a self-evident fact from the history of ideas that the Old Testament is an important and influential component of Western civilization. However, to perceive the cultural and intellectual processes (in other words, the historicity which produced such a condition) seems not so evident – in spite of the results of *Rezeptionsgeschichte* in current biblical scholarship – when analysing the influence of Western biblical memory over modern historiographical efforts to understand ancient Israelite – or, should we say, ancient Palestinian history. This diagnosis is verified by the manners and the strategies through which traditional biblical studies, both textual and archaeological, have used the biblical narrative for reconstructing the history of ancient Israel until the 1970s, in what could be deemed a realist – if not an almost naïve – interpretation of ancient stories, directly depicting ancient historical facts with which the archaeologist or the historian can innocently work. But, as noted above, the key point is that, from the point of view of intellectual history, such a historicist interpretation of biblical images, stories and events has its own historicity as well! It must be understood within the intellectual developments in western Europe since the Renaissance, but especially since the Enlightenment and its crowning of History (with a capital 'H', as expressing a single, universal historical experience) as the ultimate referent of Reality and Truth.[1] This process has one logical outcome

1. On the cultural relativization of historical consciousness, cf. F. Hartog, *Régimes d'historicité: Présentisme et expériences du temps*, La Librairie du XXIe Siècle (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2003). For approaches to the history of exegesis and biblical interpretation, see the (now dated but still of value) synthesis in J. H. Hayes, 'The History of the Study of Israelite and Judaean History', *Israelite and Judaean History*, J. H. Hayes & J. M. Miller (eds) (London: SCM Press, 1977), 1–69; and more recently, N. P. Lemche, *The Old Testament between Theology and History: A Critical Survey* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), 31–43; and in greater detail, P. Gibert, *L'invention critique de la Bible, XVe–XVIIIe siècle*, Bibliothèque des Histoires

for the interpretation of Scripture: it contends that for something to be real and evoke truth, it must be inscribed in history; therefore, the theological truth of the biblical narrative had to be inscribed in history as well: biblical events must be historical events. It is thus that biblical archaeology, as a modernist historical enterprise, finds its intellectual legitimation.[2]

From a theological perspective – and especially from within a confessional community – the Bible 'speaks to us' now, in the present, and such a transhistorical code of communication seems to have been expanded to the same extent into our contemporary understanding of ancient evocations of the past: the Bible evokes the past *historically*, as we do in modern times. This situation, of course, started being criticized and challenged with a new emphasis, particularly in biblical studies, some forty years ago.[3] Yet still, the cultural disposition of understanding the Bible *as history*, as generally depicting actual historical events to some degree, lingers nowadays; and it is widespread in the general public and, not least, among many biblical scholars.

This deconstructive awareness forces us to go beyond the simple historicization of biblical events, enabling a spectrum of sounder interpretative alternatives for the historian. We need, for instance, to approach the interpretation of biblical stories from a critical cultural and historical epistemology. By this, I mean to foster a socio-anthropological or ethnographic sensitivity in our interpretation of ancient texts in order to understand biblical evocations according to the most probable cultural, intellectual and historical contexts in which they originally appeared or were produced. As impossible to reach as this principle would seem to be, I believe the historian can expect and aim at no less from a critical methodological point of view.[4] Once we have acknowledged the cultural

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(Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2010); and M. Legaspi, *The Death of Scripture and the Rise of Biblical Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010). On a more theoretical level, one should not exclude (at least, so easily) in this respect the epistemological discussion in M. Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (London: Routledge, 2002 [orig. French edn, 1966]), esp. ch. 7.

2. Regarding this assertion, see, for instance, G. E. Wright, *Biblical Archaeology*, abridged edn (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1960), ix: 'Biblical faith is the knowledge of life's meaning in the light of what God did in a particular history. Thus the Bible cannot be understood unless the history it relates is taken seriously. Knowledge of biblical history is essential to the understanding of biblical faith.' Cf. the address to this question in T. L. Thompson, *The Origin Tradition of Ancient Israel. I: The Formation of Genesis and Exodus 1–23*, JSOTSup, 55 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987), 11–15, 22–8; also E. Pfoh, *The Emergence of Israel in Ancient Palestine: Historical and Anthropological Perspectives*, CIS (London: Equinox, 2009), 58–68.

3. I refer to the most recent synthesis in T. L. Thompson, 'Changing Perspectives on the History of Palestine', *Biblical Narrative and Palestine's History: Changing Perspectives 2*, T. L. Thompson, CIS (Sheffield: Equinox, 2013), 305–41.

4. See E. Pfoh, 'Anthropology and Biblical Studies: A Critical Manifesto', *Anthropology and the Bible: Critical Perspectives*, E. Pfoh (ed.), Biblical Intersections, 3 (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2010), 15–35. For a useful discussion on reconstructing, constructing and deconstructing history, see A. Munslow, *Deconstructing History*, 2nd edn (London:

otherness of biblical epistemology regarding its use of the past, we may be able to overcome the problematic situation of blending historical reconstruction and biblical evocation by, first, setting the context for the creation of biblical texts and finding the purpose of its production; and then, attempting to understand how the Bible evokes the past and to what extent all this is of direct or indirect, primary or secondary, use for the historian interested in writing *historically* about Israel and ancient Palestine.

The Old Testament in its (most probable) ancient historical context

Regarding our main topic of inquiry – that is, the relationship between ancient historiography, biblical stories and Hellenism – we should ask in the first place: where does the motivation for the production of biblical literature lie?[5] Following recent developments in biblical scholarship, the return from the exile in Babylon at the end of the sixth century BCE might stand as a probable *terminus a quo* in the Persian period, even if its importance is much more ideological than historical, as we have in fact few archaeological traces – if any – of such an event of return.[6] Indeed, and accepting the exilic condition as an ideological element in the Old Testament, the 'return' to the land would need an explanation for the 'returnees', something which offered answers to question of identity and self-perception. In other words, we should understand the biblical image of 'exile and return' as a founding myth for the construction of a certain identity closely related to biblical stories and the traditions about the land. As observed by N. P. Lemche:

> The exile in this way has two roles to play. It at one and the same time disconnects and unites the present and the past. It is also the instrument that guarantees that the transgressors are punished because of their sins and never allowed to return, and that their country is cleansed of their sins. The generation that returns to the land of their fathers will at the same time understand that it is their land. It belonged to their fathers and was left without inhabitants as long as the exile lasted, which says that nobody except the generation that returned should be allowed to stay in the land. As the true heirs of their fathers, the sons will take up and fulfill their obligation to Yahweh and the land in the place where their fathers failed. The exile is in this way clearly seen as a foundation myth of the Jewish people that arose sometime in the latter part of the first millennium BCE. Without the idea of an exile there could

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Routledge, 2006). I do not necessarily follow each and every argument presented by Munslow in this work; however, his survey is most enlightening on the matter.

5. What follows is abstracted and slightly revised and expanded from Pfoh, *The Emergence of Israel in Ancient Palestine*, 26–39, 44–7.
6. Actually, there is no firm evidence for a historical 'mass return': see B. Becking, '"We All Returned as One!": Critical Notes on the Myth of the Mass Return', *Judah and the Judeans in the Persian Period*, O. Lipschits & M. Oeming (eds) (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 3–18.

> be nothing like the purified remnant of Isaiah, residing on Mount Zion under the palladium of their God.[7]

This explanation provides us with an ideological cause for triggering the process of creation, perhaps in the Persian period, of what will come to be identified as the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. But, going beyond this, a probable sociohistorical context for the proper development of this creation – now with more firm circumstantial evidence – can be assumed after the analysis made by P. R. Davies, who argues that the process of Hellenization in ancient Palestine since the late fourth century BCE:

> brought Judah under the control of the Ptolemies in Egypt, and with that increasing bureaucracy, increased contact with Judeans in Egypt, and a broader use of Greek as a *lingua franca* alongside Aramaic. In the economy of Judah, bureaucracy extended to the lowest levels, with governmental officers operating even within the villages, while the introduction of Greek-speaking officials increased. Judah was no longer a small province in a large empire but had become again part of what Egypt had always regarded as its own backyard, while at the same time, a new wave of colonization brought Judah face to face directly with the political forms of Hellenization rather than with Greek culture: the Greek language, trade, and of course, education.[8]

We could think, then, of the Hellenistic period as a very probable historical, social and material context for the beginning of what is referred to as 'biblical historiography'. In sum, this involves imagining a scribal process that was per-

7. N. P. Lemche, *The Israelites in History and Tradition*, LAI (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 87. Cf. also E. T. Mullen, Jr., *Narrative History and Ethnic Boundaries: The Deuteronomistic Historian and the Creation of Israelite National Identity*, SBLSymp (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1993). On 'the Exile', see the discussion in L. L. Grabbe (ed.), *Leading Captivity Captive: 'The Exile' as History and Ideology*, JSOTSup, 278/ESHM, 2 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998); and the perspectives in Lipschits & Oeming, *Judah and the Judeans in the Persian Period*.

8. P. R. Davies, *Scribes and Schools: The Canonization of the Hebrew Scriptures*, LAI (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 71. On the spread of Hellenism, see M. Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in Their Encounter in Palestine during the Early Hellenistic Period* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1974), vol. I, esp. 58–65 (diffusion of Greek language in Palestine), 65–83 (expansion of education, i.e. the *gymnasium*), and 83–102 (Greek philosophy and literature in Palestine); also, in general, A. M. Berlin, 'Between Large Forces: Palestine in the Hellenistic Period', *BA* 60 (1997), 2–51; and, on the socio-economic developments fostered by Hellenism, H.-P. Kuhnen, 'Israel unmittelbar vor und nach Alexander der Großen. Geschichtlicher Wandel und archäeologischer Befund', *Die Griechen und das antike Israel: Interdisziplinäre Studien zur Religions- und Kulturgeschichte des Heiligen Landes*, S. Alkier & M. Witte (eds), OBO, 201 (Fribourg: Academic Press, 2004), 1–27.

haps ignited by a Persian exilic condition – or better, its ideology[9] – had then its peak and resolution during the Hellenistic period, and that may well have lasted, in its final arrangements, until Roman times. This does not necessarily mean, of course, that the biblical stories were created out of nothing in the Hellenistic period. It is clear that many traditions and motifs in them are older, dating from the Assyrian and Persian periods,[10] and also from much earlier times and related to different locations in the Near East: at least as early as the Sumerian period, if we link Genesis 6–9 with the Gilgamesh epic; New Kingdom Egypt, if we note the resemblances between the Hymn to the Sun God of Akhenaton and Psalm 104; Late Bronze Age Syria, if we consider the story of Idrimi of Alalakh and David's ascension to the throne; etc. What I propose here is that both the motivation and the necessary material resources for beginning the writing of what later would become the Old Testament find a more appropriate context during the Hellenistic period; yet the mythic kernel contained in biblical traditions, memories and stories come from centuries, even millennia, of intellectual development in the Near East.[11] The first part of this proposition is further illustrated if we compare the variant modes of evoking the past in the ancient Eastern Mediterranean during the second half of the first millennium BCE.

9. See R. P. Carroll, 'Exile! What Exile? Deportation and the Discourses of Diaspora', in *Leading Captivity Captive: 'The Exile' as History and Ideology*, L. L. Grabbe (ed.), JSOTSup, 278/ESHM, 2 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 62–79. As Carroll observes, 'we are on safer ground treating these tropes [exile and return] as literary and cultural rather than as necessarily having purely historical referents' (64).
10. See R. Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament*, 2 vols; OTL (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994), vol. 1, 156–80; A. Schoors, *Die Königreiche Israel und Juda im 8. und 7. Jahrhundert v. Chr.*, Biblische Enzyklopädie, 5 (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1998), 108–81; W. Houston, 'Was there a Social Crisis in the Eighth Century?', *In Search of Pre-Exilic Israel. Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminar 2001–2003*, J. Day (ed.), JSOTSup, 406 (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 130–49; H. M. Barstad, 'Can Prophetic Texts Be Dated? Amos 1–2 as an Example', *Ahab Agonistes: The Rise and Fall of the Omri Dynasty*, LHB/OTS, 421/ESHM, L. L. Grabbe (ed.), 6 (London: T&T Clark, 2007), 21–40, esp. 36–7, in relation to prophetic literature. See, however, the pertinent remarks in Lemche, *The Israelites*, 27–8 and 94–5; *idem*, *The Old Testament between Theology and History*, 212–34; Davies, *Scribes and Schools*, 107–25; E. Ben Zvi, 'Beginning to Address the Question: Why Were Prophetic Books Produced and "Consumed" in Ancient Yehud?', *Historie og konstruktion. Festskrift til Niels Peter Lemche i anledning af 60 års fødselsdagen den 6. september 2005*, M. Müller & T. L. Thompson (eds), FBE, 14 (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanums Forlag, 2005), 30–41; and in M. Nissinen, 'How Prophecy Became Literature', *SJOT* 19 (2005), 153–72. Cf. also the interpretive disposition in T. L. Thompson, *The Bible in History: How Writers Create a Past* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1999), 388–91, against such a historical view of biblical prophets.
11. See especially T. L. Thompson, *The Messiah Myth: The Near Eastern Roots of Jesus and David* (New York: Basic Books, 2005), chapters 5–10.

Biblical, Greek and Roman uses of the past

The comparison of biblical stories with Greco-Roman historiography has some relevant antecedents in recent scholarship as a means of exposing influences, parallelisms and borrowings, but also dating the composition and production of biblical literature.[12] This goes along with the opportunity of readdressing our understanding of how ancient Eastern Mediterranean elites constructed and evoked the past. (Elites are not the whole of the population; since the textual remnants of ancient stories and traditions are the products of a scribal class – an important component of ruling elites in antiquity – we hardly have access to what most of the people, peasantry and other anonymous and voiceless social elements thought or experienced.)[13]

Traditionally, the study of recalling the past among the peoples of the Eastern Mediterranean basin and the Near East established a watershed between

12. See, among other studies and with different conclusions, N. P. Lemche, 'The Old Testament – A Hellenistic Book?', *SJOT* 7 (1993), 163–93; S. Mandell & D. N. Freedman, *The Relationship between Herodotus' History and Primary History*, SFSHJ, 60 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1993); F. A. J. Nielsen, *The Tragedy in History: Herodotus and the Deuteronomistic History*, JSOTSup, 251/CIS, 4 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997); J. C. Poirier, 'Generational Reckoning in Hesiod and in the Pentateuch', *JNES* 62 (2003), 193–9; L. D. Hawk, 'Violent Grace: Tragedy and Transformation in the *Oresteia* and the Deuteronomistic History', *JSOT* 28 (2001), 73–88; K. Stott, 'Herodotus and the Old Testament: A Comparative Reading of the Ascendancy Stories of King Cyrus and David', *SJOT* 16 (2002), 52–78; J.-W. Wesselius, *The Origin of the History of Israel: Herodotus'* Histories *as Blueprint for the First Books of the Bible*, JSOTSup, 345 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002); H.-P. Mathys, 'Das Alte Testament – ein hellenistisches Buch', *Kein Land für sich allein: Studien zum Kulturkontakt in Kanaan, Israel/Palästina und Ebirnâri für Manfred Weippert zum 65. Geburstag*, OBO, U. Hübner & E. A. Knauf (eds), 166 (Fribourg: Academic Press/Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2002), 278–93; T. B. Dozeman, 'Geography and History in Herodotus and in Ezra–Nehemiah', *JBL* 122 (2003), 449–66; G. A. Knoppers, 'Greek Historiography and the Chronicler's History: A Reexamination', *JBL* 122 (2003), 627–50; G. Larsson, 'Possible Hellenistic Influences in the Historical Parts of the Old Testament', *SJOT* 18 (2004), 296–311; N. Na'aman, 'The Danite Campaign Northward (Judges XVII–XVIII) and the Migration of the Phocaeans to Massalia (Strabo IV 1,4)', *VT* 55 (2005), 47–60; Ł. Niesiołowski-Spanò, 'Primeval History in the Persian Period?', *SJOT* 21 (2007), 106–26; and the challenging studies by R. Gmirkin, *Berossus and Genesis, Manetho and Exodus: Hellenistic Histories and the Date of the Pentateuch*, LHB/OTS, 433/CIS, 15 (London: T&T Clark, 2006), which places a date for the composition of the Pentateuch *c*. early third century BCE, following the works of Berossus and Manetho (as its title indicates) under the literary patronage of Ptolemy II; and P. Wajdenbaum, *Argonauts of the Desert: Structural Analysis of the Hebrew Bible*, CIS (Sheffield: Equinox, 2011), which proposes a direct dependence of biblical stories from Greek mythical and philosophical traditions (see further below).

13. On Judean scribes, see Davies, *Scribes and Schools*, 74–88. See also, for a comparison with Mesopotamian history, M. van de Mieroop, *Cuneiform Texts and the Writing of History*, Approaching the Ancient World, 6 (London: Routledge, 1999).

Egyptians, Mesopotamians and Israelites, on the one hand, and Greeks and Romans, on the other.[14] The latter were thought of as the real historians of antiquity. In fact, the Greeks are still viewed as the proper fathers of ancient history-writing, after the works of Hecataeus of Miletus (*c*. late sixth century BCE), Herodotus (*c*.490–424 BCE), Thucydides (*c*.460–400 BCE) and Xenophon (*c*.430–354 BCE), in spite of some views attempting to grant this title to 'biblical historiography'.[15] This general distinction must be evaluated critically, since it seems to place all the attention on the variation of a cultural trait (to talk or write about the past) and not the key social function of that cultural trait in all its expressions.

Aside from this distinction, it is clear that Near Eastern civilization had an important intellectual influence on many aspects of Greek culture in pre-classical times, especially on mythic and religious conceptions, proving in this way the existence of open channels of communication between the regions (and their peoples) of the Eastern Mediterranean and Western Asia.[16] This conceptual influence, however, did not prevent the emergence in Hellas of a singular, specific historical understanding with its own characteristics.[17] Nor, however, does

14. See A. Momigliano, *La historiografía griega* (Barcelona: Crítica, 1984 = *La storiografia greca* [Torino: Einaudi, 1984]); A. Kuhrt, 'Israelite and Near Eastern Historiography', *IOSOT Congress Volume – Oslo 1998*, A. Lemaire & M. Sæbø (eds), VTSup, 80 (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 257–79; L. L. Grabbe, 'Who Were the First Real Historians? On the Origins of Critical Historiography', *Did Moses Speak Attic? Jewish Historiography and Scripture in the Hellenistic Period*, L. L. Grabbe (ed.), JSOTSup, 317/ESHM, 3 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 156–81. See also the overview in J. Van Seters, 'The Historiography of the Ancient Near East', *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*, J. M. Sasson (ed.) (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1995), vol. IV, 2433–44, placing Israelite historiography closer to Greek rather than to Near Eastern 'historical' works.
15. See especially on this B. Halpern, *The First Historians: The Hebrew Bible and History* (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1988).
16. See, in general, W. Burkert, *The Orientalizing Revolution: Near Eastern Influence on Greek Culture in the Early Archaic Age*, Revealing Antiquity, 5 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992); M. L. West, 'Ancient Near Eastern Myths in Classical Greek Religious Thought', *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*, J. M. Sasson (ed.) (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1995), vol. I, 33–42; E. Van Dongen, 'The Study of Near Eastern Influences on Greece: Toward the Point', *Kaskal: Rivista di storia, ambienti e culture del Vicino Oriente Antico* 5 (2008), 233–50. In particular, see the recent study by B. Louden, *Homer's* Odyssey *and the Near East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).
17. It is also relevant to note here, for instance, the apparent difference that scholars have observed between the biblical conception of time (broadly speaking, teleological or linear), and the Greek one (cyclical); cf. T. Boman, *Hebrew Thought Compared with Greek* (London: SCM Press, 1960); see also Momigliano, *La historiografía griega*, 66–93. It must be pointed out here that this difference is indeed relative, as time circularity in the enactment of rituals can be identified in most cultures, as argued, for instance, by M. Eliade in *Le mythe de l'éternel retour: Archétypes et répétition* (Paris: Librairie Gallimard, 1954); for Israel, see G. von Rad, 'Les idées sur le temps et l'histoire en Israël et l'eschatologie des prophètes', *Maqqél Shâqédh, la branche d'amandier: Hommage à*

that difference imply diametrically opposite worldviews. It is true that Greeks created a singular manner of evoking the past, 'searching for the cause' of things, as in the works of Herodotus, Thucydides and Xenophon.[18] Furthermore, as Marcel Detienne has indicated, 'Herodotus seems to be the first in Greece to separate as clearly as possible the history of the gods and the history of humans.'[19] Nevertheless, and despite the differences between 'biblical historiography', in which God is an essential participant and there is no explicit authorship, and a more human-oriented Greek historiography with explicit individual authors, it must be noted that a common philosophy of history underlay both evocations of the past, mythic or not, which demonstrates that their relevance lay in their didactic functions rather than in historical or historicist ones.

Ancient biblical and Greek authors have more in common than the ancient Greeks have with modern historians. As Detienne also observes, 'for Thucydides, the past, the *archaiologia*, is neither interesting nor significant. It is a sort of preamble, a prelude to [the] present … The present is actually the basis for understanding the "past".'[20] On the other hand, it is true – as L. L. Grabbe notes – that Thucydides, in his *History of the Peloponnesian War*, and Polybius, in his history of Rome from the First Punic War on, have pursued 'scientific' aims and have appealed to the testimonies of direct witnesses – given the chance. In sum, they have tried to separate *mythos* from *logos*.[21] Yet, the main sociological function of such critical method was far from equivalent to modern, academic research. We should also observe that this Greek 'history' (ἱστορία), this 'survey' or 'investigation', was far closer to ethnography, to the description and representation of others, as F. Hartog defined it in regard to Herodotus, than is modern history-writing.[22]

Livy's (59 BCE to 17 CE) *Ab urbe condita* – the history of Rome from its origins until the Principate of Augustus – evokes the past as linked to the politi-

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Wilhelm Vischer, D. Lys *et al.* (Montpellier: Causse, Graille, Castelnau, 1960), 198–209; J. Barr, *Biblical Words for Time,* SBTh 33 (Naperville, 1962). See also the more up-to-date, yet brief address in E. S. Gruen, 'Hebraism and Hellenism', *The Oxford Handbook of Hellenic Studies*, G. Boys-Stone, B. Graziosi & P. Vasunia (eds) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 129–39.

18. See Momigliano, *La historiografía griega*, 9–45; M. Detienne, 'A Debate on Comparative Historicities', *Israel Constructs Its History: Deuteronomistic Historiography in Recent Research*, A. de Pury, T. Römer & J.-D. Macchi (eds), JSOTSup, 306 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 174–88; Grabbe, 'Who Were the First Real Historians?', 161–71.
19. Detienne, 'A Debate on Comparative Historicities', 186. On Herodotus, see the important study of F. Hartog, *Le miroir d'Hérodote: Essai sur la représentation de l'autre* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1980), which characterizes him more as an ethnographer than a proper historian: Herodotus would have an image portrayed of Asiatic peoples as a means for reassuring Greek identity.
20. Detienne, 'A Debate on Comparative Historicities', 185; see also F. Hartog, *Évidence de l'histoire: Ce que voient les historiens*, Folio Histoire, 157 (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2007), 91–108.
21. Grabbe, 'Who Were the First Real Historians?', 164–71.
22. Hartog, *Le miroir d'Hérodote*, *passim.*

cal realities of the author, with clear interests in legitimizing the rule of Julius Caesar. As R. Syme noted many years ago:

> the story of the first days of the city, established as the old poet recorded 'augusto augurio', called for a consecrated word and for commemoration of the Founder of Rome – 'deum deo natum, regem parentemque urbis Romanae'. But it would not do to draw too precise a parallel. The Romulus of legend already possessed too many of the authentic features of Caesar the Dictator, some of them recently acquired or at least enhanced.[23]

Livy's intention and Virgil's, in his *Aeneid*, are analogous: offering a legitimation of the present by using the past. Indeed, 'Virgil was engaged in writing an epic poem that should reveal the hand of destiny in the earliest origins of Rome, the continuity of Roman history and its culmination in the rule of Augustus.'[24] The political motivations behind such historiographic works are undeniable: 'Virgil, Horace and Livy are the enduring glories of the Principate; and all three were on terms of personal friendship with Augustus. The class to which these men of letters belonged had everything to gain from the new order',[25] and they legitimized their situation by appealing to a past that was created in reflection on the present.

We should remember that, for Livy, history was 'the teacher of life', a conception fully expressed by Cicero (106–43 BCE) in *De oratore* II.IX.36: '*Historia vero testis temporum, lux veritatis, vita memoriae, magistra vitae, nuntia vetustatis, qua voce alia nisi oratoris immortalitati commendatur?*'[26] In that sense:

> History, in the Roman style, is more a memory than a survey: *memoria*, it has been observed, in the sense of an 'awareness of the past' that establishes the present and implies a certain kind of behaviour inherited from the *majores*, the ancestors. A past heavily present, that is authoritative but also knows how to open up in the direction of the future, that of a nation sure of itself, and for long centuries.[27]

There also existed a close relationship between rhetoric and history, as can be observed in Quintilian (*c*.40–100 CE) in *Institutio Oratoriae*, or in Cicero,

23. R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1960 [1939]), 464; see also 459–75; and Momigliano, *La historiografía griega*, 115–16.
24. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, 462. See also the *Aeneid* I.286ff.
25. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, 464.
26. See N. P. Lemche, 'Good and Bad in History: The Greek Connection', *Rethinking the Foundations: Historiography in the Ancient World and in the Bible. Essays in Honour of John Van Seters*, S. L. McKenzie & T. Römer (eds), BZAW, 294 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2000), 127–40, esp. 133–5; *idem*, 'How Does One Date an Expression of Mental History? The Old Testament and Hellenism', in *Did Moses Speak Attic? Jewish Historiography and Scripture in the Hellenistic Period*, L. L. Grabbe (ed.), JSOTSup, 317/ESHM, 3 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 200–22, esp. 202–3 and 221–2.
27. Detienne, 'A Debate on Comparative Historicities', 182.

in *De oratore*, *Brutus* and *Orator*, as Lemche has observed.[28] In this way, history becomes a medium of persuasion: an intellectual strategy anchored in the political present.

> The connection between rhetoric, philosophy, and historiography that is evident in Roman tradition can be traced back to the Greek and Hellenistic tradition. The sophists of the fifth century BCE – in particular Gorgias (485–375 BCE) – played an important part in this development. But the rhetor Isocrates (436–338 BCE) was the central figure. On one hand, Isocrates represented a continuation of the sophist tradition of the fifth century that had established the connection between historiography and rhetoric. On the other, he built on the connection made in Greek political theory (Plato, Aristotle) between politics and ethics. Although he never composed a work of history, Isocrates saw historiography as a means of transmitting ethical ideas; we may call this 'ideological historiography'.[29]

The reason for presenting all this descriptive data is that a connection between Greek and Roman historiographies and biblical stories concerning the 'idea of a past' (in the so-called Primeval History) can be maintained,[30] while acknowledging the peculiarities of each tradition of ancient scholarship, because there seems to exist a certain linkage, not so much temporal as *cultural*, between these apparently irreconcilable literary productions. This linkage permits finding intellectual unity in textual diversity.

A shared intellectual world

Ultimately, the separation between the 'essence' of the ancient Near Eastern world and the later world of Greece has been crafted by the West's reflection on its own cultural origins.[31] The idea that 'the West' was born in ancient Greece is a rather modern one. However, it should not be forgotten that Greece was also

28. Cf. Lemche, 'Good and Bad in History', 133–5; see also Hartog, *Évidence de l'histoire*, 43–52.
29. Lemche, 'Good and Bad in History', 134–5.
30. The idea is not novel here, as it can be found already in J. Van Seters, *In Search of History: Historiography in the Ancient World and the Origins of Biblical History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1983), esp. 40–51; *idem*, 'The Primeval Histories of Greece and Israel Compared', *ZAW* 100 (1988), 1–22.
31. Cf. M. Bernal, *Black Athena: The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilization. I: The Invention of Ancient Greece, 1785–1985* (London: Free Association Books, 1987); but cf. also the relevant critical address in Baines, 'On the Aims and Methods of *Black Athena*', and M. Liverani, 'The Bathwater and the Baby', both in *Black Athena Revisited*, M. R. Lefkowitz & G. MacLean Rogers (eds) (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 27–48 and 421–7 respectively, and in many of the contributions to that volume, correcting and even refuting Bernal. I think, nonetheless, that Bernal's historiographical gesture is a most valid one: to rethink our given knowledge!

part of a larger and older Eastern world (economically, religiously, etc.). Rather than constituting a polarized neighbour to the East, as Greek writers (notably Herodotus) have argued, ancient Greece was, simply, a variation of that world: including its mythic evocations of gods and heroes, as well as its stories of the past. As C. Grottanelli summed up the issue, regarding ancient narrative (and recalling C. Gordon's thesis):

> Probably, a common repertoire of motifs and tales, widespread in the Eastern Mediterranean *koinē*, was modified in similar ways independently by Greeks, Arameans and Hebrews around the middle of the first millennium BCE, and gave rise to the new type of narratives. Thus the Hebrew Bible with its characteristic narrative style and the Greek narrative traditions whose first representatives were authors such as Herodotus, Xenophon, Ctesias and Xanthus of Lydia, and whose final product was the Greek novel, arose from similar but autonomous transformations of a common tradition of myths, legends and fairy-tales.[32]

Also, T. L. Thompson's words about the 'Greek (re)encounter[33] with the East' in Hellenistic times illustrate our point well here:

> Not only is the world of Hellenism a direct descendant of the intellectual culture of the ancient Near East, from Babylon to Thebes, but that Hellenistic culture itself, with roots centuries old, is a product of a civilization that stretched from the Western Mediterranean to the Indus valley and from the Anatolian plateau to the Sudan. There is no particularly Greek way of thinking, any more than there was a Hebrew or Semitic. There never was a pre-logical way of thinking to contrast with Greek philosophy. Aristotle formulated and systematized what had been well understood for centuries. Formal philosophical texts appear already with some of our earliest texts from ancient Sumer and Egypt.[34]

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32. C. Grottanelli, 'The Ancient Novel and Biblical Narrative', *Quaderni Urbinati di Cultura Classica* NS 27 (1987), 7–34, here 33. Cf. C. H. Gordon, *Before the Bible: The Common Background of Greek and Hebrew Civilizations* (New York: Harper & Row, 1962).
33. Since Greek mercenaries were a kind of forerunners of Hellenism; see W.-D. Niemeier, 'Archaic Greeks in the Orient: Textual and Archaeological Evidence', *BASOR* 322 (2001), 11–32; R. Wenning, 'Griechischer Einfluss auf Palästina in vorhellenistischer Zeit?', *Die Griechen und das antike Israel: Interdisziplinäre Studien zur Religions- und Kulturgeschichte des Heiligen Landes*, S. Alkier & M. Witte (eds), OBO, 201 (Fribourg: Academic Press/Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004), 29–60; N. Luraghi, 'Traders, Pirates, Warriors: The Proto-History of Greek Mercenaries Soldiers in the Eastern Mediterranean', *Phoenix* 60 (2006), 21–47; E. Van Dongen, 'Contacts between Pre-Classical Greece and the Near East in the Context of Cultural Influences: An Overview', *Getrennte Wege? Kommunikation, Raum und Wahrnehmung in der Alten Welt*, R. Rollinger, A. Luther & J. Wiesehöfer (eds), Oikumene – Studien zur antiken Weltgeschichte, 2 (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Antike, 2007), 13–49.
34. Thompson, *The Bible in History*, 380.

A much clearer picture emerges if we perceive and integrate the question under analysis into a broader comparative outlook. Before detecting direct dependences in a void, we should accept the wide communicative scenario in which stories and motifs transit. Again, as Thompson writes:

> To argue for historical dependence and direct relationship between such texts [i.e. Near Eastern and biblical], separated from each other as they are, is more than we can do. Attempting to do so ignores many qualities of our texts and carries us beyond simple questions about whether a particular work may have been original or not. Common bonds of technique, rhetoric, function and sentiment imply a relationship that is well beyond the sharing of phrases, metaphors, motifs and themes, or even entire segments of a story or a song. An intellectual world was shared. The Bible is a collection of specific compositions that Samaritan, Jewish and other Palestinian scribes produced and contributed. They shared and transmitted a common ancient Near Eastern intellectual and cultural world created by Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Syrian, Persian and Greek writers. Each of the ancient works we draw into our comparison was formed within a common stream of tradition and opened their readers to a worldview that dominated the region for millennia.[35]

Within this cultural universe of shared symbolic perceptions, we find the relationships between Near Eastern (properly speaking), biblical, Greek and Roman stories and compositions. Traditions and literary motifs travel through time and space, and such travel must have been accomplished in what the Spanish Egyptologist J. Cervelló Autuori used to explain the cultural origins of the ancient Egyptian monarchy in an African context; namely, a 'shared cultural substratum' (*sustrato cultural compartido*), in which a determined set of beliefs is common among many peoples within a definable region (in his case, the Nile basin). Such beliefs are shared and exchanged, but there is also a psychological predisposition present, which enables the use and reuse of these beliefs and representations of them in different forms over an extended period of time.[36] We can reaffirm the conclusion of J. L. Crenshaw:

35. Thompson, *The Messiah Myth*, 25. One is reminded by this statement of the conclusion of an old and long article by C. H. Gordon: 'No longer can we assume that Greece is the hermetically sealed Olympian miracle, any more than we can consider Israel the vacuum-packed miracle from Sinai. Rather must we view Greek and Hebrew civilizations as parallel structures built upon the same East Mediterranean foundation', from his 'Homer and the Bible: The Origin and Character of East Mediterranean Literature', *HUCA* 26 (1955), 43–108, here 108.

36. Cf. J. Cervelló Autuori, *Egipto y África. Origen de la civilización y la monarquía faraónicas en su contexto africano*, Aula Orientalis–Supplementa, 13 (Sabadell: AUSA, 1996), §93. A 'cultural substratum' is a background but also a certain essence, a shared social system of behaviour and collective values, a cultural worldview, etc. Indeed, the concept can be compared to Clifford Geertz's 'symbol system' ('Religion as a Cultural System', *The Interpretation of Cultures* [London: Hutchinson, 1973], 91–9), as applied by T.

> A significant literature from ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Israel possesses such a sufficient thematic and formal unity as to suggest a common context of origin and purpose, allowing for distinctions in the several areas. Those texts comprise the ancient effort to acquire knowledge and to embody wisdom in personal character.[37]

Adopting the notion of a shared intellectual world, and looking further for structural similarities among the whole literary production of the history of the ancient Near East (including biblical narrative) and those of Greece and Rome, one can now comprehend the number of parallels and influences that may well be detected. As noted above, during the last two decades or so many comparative studies (mainly in the field of biblical studies) have appeared.[38] Perhaps, and to the point of our reflections here, one of the most relevant examples of these similarities has emerged as a result of comparing the narrative pattern of Herodotus' *Histories* and the Primary History and/or the Deuteronomistic History. The reasons for this comparison seem to be most appropriate, as it is precisely during the last half of the first millennium BCE that many 'national historiographies' appeared: not only Herodotus', but Berossus of Chaldea (*c*. fourth century BCE) and his *Babyloniaca*, the Egyptian priest Manetho (*c*. third century BCE), with his *Aegyptiaca*, the later Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*c*. late first century BCE) and his *Antiquitates Romanae*, as well as Philo of Byblos (*c*. first century CE) and his history of Phoenicia. Furthermore, and besides these ancient historiographical examples, the comparative possibilities with biblical structures and stories include the works of Homer and Hesiod, or tragedies like Aeschylus's dramatic trilogy, the *Oresteia*. Briefly stated, these comparable compositions should be understood as being the last expression of a larger cultural continuum covering the whole of the ancient Near East and the Eastern Mediterranean from Early Mesopotamian times to the Roman period.

To sum up in this context, and as G. W. Trompf already noted, 'so much of what is usually associated with Greco-Roman historiography – recurring principles in history, lessons learnt for the future from the past – is present in a distinctively Hebraic form',[39] in the narratives of the Old Testament. Thus, we can affirm that the biblical narrative from Genesis to Kings seems to have been another Hellenistic example of a composition – an acculturated composition![40]

L. Thompson in his 'Kingship and the Wrath of God: Or Teaching Humility', *RB* 109 (2002), 161–96, esp. 162 n. 2; also *idem*, *The Bible in History*, 293–374.

37. J. L. Crenshaw, 'The Contemplative Life in the Ancient Near East', *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*, J. M. Sasson (ed.) (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1995), vol. IV, 2445–57, here 2456.
38. See the bibliography in footnote 12.
39. G. W. Trompf, 'Notions of Historical Recurrence in Classical Hebrew Historiography', *Studies in the Historical Books of the Old Testament*, J. A. Emerton (ed.), VTSup, 30 (Leiden: Brill, 1979), 213–29, here 223.
40. Cf. D. M. Carr, *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart: Origins of Scripture and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 253–85, who refers to 'Hellenistic

– aimed at an analogous purpose as the rest of these 'historiographies': to narrate the origins of a particular people and their place in history as seen from a Judean, then Jewish theological perspective, which created behavioural standards to reflect on.

On influence and borrowing – and the creation of texts

An important contribution germane to the general perspective offered in this chapter is the recent publication of Philippe Wajdenbaum's *Argonauts of the Desert: Structural Analysis of the Hebrew Bible*.[41] Wajdenbaum places a strong emphasis on a direct borrowing from Greek literature, especially Plato's philosophical writings, in the creation of biblical stories (in particular, those belonging to the books comprising the so-called Enneateuch) through an impressive catalogue of comparisons dealing with the structure and functions of literary motifs and figures. Certainly, this work has set an empirical attestation of parallelisms that is undoubtedly difficult to ignore: it is clearly apparent that many biblical stories echo different episodes of Greek compositions and tales. Nevertheless, I would better place the Greek influence Wajdenbaum finds in Genesis–Kings within the larger, shared Eastern Mediterranean intellectual world or cultural substratum argued above. This allows a wider range of Near Eastern influences on biblical literature (i.e. from Mesopotamia, Syria and Egypt), from numerous centres where intellectual work of considerable proportion could have taken place, such as Alexandria and Seleucia.[42] It also creates the possibility of communication between cultures over an extended period, in which literary elements were borrowed, adapted, reused and so on for different purposes.

Hellenism appears to have been the dynamic factor behind Near Eastern scholarship of this period, rearranging knowledge in new forms. We should not think, however, that Alexander's conquest spread a particularly Greek way of thinking and speaking about the past in Western Asia. We have already seen that the general practice of referring to the past in search of meaning was part of the shared cultural universe throughout the whole of the Eastern Mediterranean and Western Asia. What may have been spread by the Greeks is the structure of a narrative 'historiographical' genre, through which such evocation was manifest. This is certainly a historical possibility illustrated ethno-historically and ethnographically by several cases of acculturation between societies in contact,

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enculturation' and a process of 'education-enculturation' as formative of the Hebrew Bible in the Hasmonean period.

41. Wajdenbaum, *Argonauts of the Desert*.
42. As Lemche suggests, '[t]he Jewish Diaspora constitutes the context of the historiographer and his public, not only the exile in Mesopotamia but the dispersal of Judaism in the Persian or Hellenistic world' (*The Old Testament between Theology and History*, 211). See also N. P. Lemche, 'How Does One Date an Expression of Mental History?'; *idem*, 'Does the Idea of the Old Testament as a Hellenistic Book Prevent Source Criticism of the Pentateuch?', *SJOT* 25 (2011), 75–92.

from one dominant culture to another, dominated one. Such acculturation is not a mere diffusion of features, but an integration of foreign elements in a native world that does not lose its original characteristics completely. They are rather modified according to different factors, each of which must be studied in relation to its historical situation.[43]

Understood from this perspective, Greek and Hellenistic influence seems to be the strongest and probably most decisive factor in shaping many stories in the Pentateuch and Deuteronomistic History, or in the 'Primary History', as Nielsen, Wesselius, Gmirkin and Wajdenbaum rightly argue.[44] However, we must consider that the final shape of the ideology of the Old Testament, with Jerusalem as a 'mythic chrono-spatial centre', seems to reflect clearly a 'centralization of religious and secular power in a single place (Jerusalem)',[45] which, in this context, is to be found (outside the biblical texts) in the rule of Palestine by the Hasmonean priest-kings of the second century BCE. This means that, after the intellectual process of influence and borrowing, which created the narrative from Genesis to Kings in the Hellenistic centres of Western Asia, there must have been a theo-ideological arrangement of this collection of stories within the context of Palestine corresponding to the political situation in Hasmonean Jerusalem.[46] Accordingly, for instance, if we consider the stories about Abram visiting Jerusalem (Gen. 14:17-20), the defeat of the king of Jerusalem by Joshua (Josh. 10), the conquest of Jerusalem by David (2 Sam. 5:6-10; 1 Chron. 11:4-9) and the foundation story of a rebuilt city by Ezra and Nehemiah,[47] all could find a proper background under Hasmonean rule from Jerusalem, legitimizing it with

43. See N. Wachtel, 'L'acculturation', *Faire de l'histoire. I: Nouveaux problèmes*, J. Le Goff & P. Nora (eds), Bibliothèque des Histoires (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1974), 124–46, esp. 124–5. Of course, Syria–Palestine in pre-Hellenistic times was the scenario of diverse foreign presence with different impact on local societies: cf. M. Liverani, 'Dall'acculturazione alla deculturazione: Consideracioni sul rolo dei contatti politici ed economici nella storia siro-palestinese pre-ellenistica', *Forme di contatto e processi di trasformazione delle società antiche. Atti del Convegno di Cortone (24–30 Maggio 1981)*, G. Nenci (ed.), Publications de l'École Française de Rome, 67 (Rome: École Française de Rome, 1983), 503–20.

44. Nielsen, *The Tragedy in History*; Wesselius, *The Origin of the History of Israel*; Gmirkin, *Berossus and Genesis*; Wajdenbaum, *Argonauts of the Desert*. It is still to be seen how we can integrate the variant, although not mutually exclusive, analytical frameworks of these different scholars into a general and coherent exposition of Greek and Hellenistic influence in biblical narrative.

45. I. Hjelm, *Jerusalem's Rise to Sovereignty: Zion and Gerizim in Competition*, JSOTSup, 404/CIS, 14 (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 3 and 1 respectively.

46. The Masoretic chronology seems clearly to depend on a system that takes the rededication of Jerusalem's temple in 164 BCE as a key date: cf. T. L. Thompson, *The Historicity of the Patriarchal Narratives: The Quest for the Historical Abraham*, BZAW, 133 (Leiden: Brill, 1974), 9–16, esp. 15; Davies, *Scribes and Schools*, 180–81.

47. See T. M. Bolin, 'The Making of the Holy City: On the Foundations of Jerusalem in the Hebrew Bible', *Jerusalem in Ancient History and Tradition*, T. L. Thompson (ed.), JSOTSup, 381/CIS, 13 (London: T&T Clark, 2003), 171–96.

evoked traditions of mythic proportion, resembling Greek and Roman tales of heroes: visiting, conquering and founding particular places – giving laws and establishing social order. Indeed, as T. M. Bolin observes:

> [t]he stories of heroic foundations of a city in general and of colonization in particular, that is, just the kind of tales about Jerusalem in the Hebrew Bible, are more typical of Hellenistic, rather than ancient Near Eastern, literature, which prefers to offer divine origins for cities.[48]

In this way, we can think of a Hellenistic biblical collection of stories having its final ideological shaping in Hasmonean Jerusalem. This scenario offers a probable *terminus ad quem* for the theological production of biblical literature. Yet this 'editorial' or canonical production may be extended into rabbinic times in the second century CE.[49]

Conclusions

The authors of biblical, Greek and Roman collections of tradition refer to the past, variously. However, that past is not the same one which modern historians wish to write about. In paraphrase of what M. Liverani suggested years ago: all such ancient narratives, many 'historiographic', should be interpreted as *intellectual products of an ancient society rather than as windows through which the historian might witness an ancient society*.[50] For ancient authors, 'history' is not something we know 'as it actually happened'. History is only valid as a means of comprehending, for example, divine will, giving an account of the origins of a specific people, explaining a common tradition or understanding

48. Bolin, 'The Making of the Holy City', 193.
49. Lemche, 'The Old Testament – A Hellenistic Book?', 163; cf. further Davies, *Scribes and Schools*, 169–84; in particular, Davies writes: 'The likely creators of the canon that the rabbis inherited were, therefore, the Hasmoneans, who appropriately blended a veneration of stories of the past with knowledge of (and liking for) Hellenistic monarchy and even alliances with Greeks and Romans. "Judaism" as defining a religious system was in a sense a product of Hellenism, and so was its canon. Both are of course related to each other and came about through a combination of imitation of, and reaction to, the foreign culture. The Hasmonean bequest was national identity but also internal dissent. It was in the name of their "Israel" that the Judeans fought Rome and lost the temple, with the result that the rabbis again reconstituted a different "Israel", and having iconized the scriptures set about canonizing all over again' (182). See also, more recently, on the 'Hasmonean initiative' regarding canonization, P. R. Davies, 'The Hebrew Canon and the Origins of Judaism', *The Historian and the Bible: Essays in Honour of Lester L. Grabbe*, P. R. Davies & D. V. Edelman (eds), LHB/OTS, 530 (London: T&T Clark, 2010), 194–206.
50. M. Liverani, 'Memorandum on the Approach to Historiographic Texts', *Orientalia* NS 42 (1973), 178–94; cf. also Lemche, *The Old Testament between Theology and History*, 110–12.

the political present. Such intellectual traditions of ancient self-perception and representation of the past must not be translated into historical events in modern (re)constructions of the past. A cultural translation is necessary. An evaluation of the epistemological code behind ancient written texts is mandatory for the historian, in order not to read a current worldview into ancient sources.

In the Old Testament, the past evoked offers a scenario wherein Yahweh's will is expressed (and both obeyed and disobeyed). History – a word unknown in Hebrew – is *the place* rather than *the time* in which events occur, where an archetypical relationship between Yahweh and his chosen people happens. For the Greeks, historiography is the result of investigating causes of present situations. The ancient Romans understood it as memory and, together with the Greek example, such 'memory' had an important role to play in the political affairs of their own time. In each of these cases, a certain treatment of the past is found. In none of these were there professional historians writing 'history', in spite of the works of Herodotus, Thucydides and Livy, or the so-called biblical Deuteronomists or Chronicler.

Finally, it is reasonable to suggest that the stories collected in the Old Testament came into being together with such Greco-Roman traditions of ancient scholarship between the late sixth and the second centuries BCE. I would not rule out the possibility of scribes in the Persian period starting this process, but these stories were most probably developed during the Hellenistic period, between the fourth and second centuries BCE, necessarily after the appearance of Greek and Hellenistic cognate literature, in order to account for their influence on biblical narrative.[51] In spite of the singularities and differences of biblical narrative, it belongs to this intellectual world, together with the products of Greek, Hellenistic and Roman authors. Thus, Lemche concluded, the 'biblical historiographers were Hellenized Orientals'.[52] The ways of dealing with the past in biblical and Greek (and later on, Roman) literature clearly share a common motivation in the Hellenistic world: the past is used didactically to inform about identity, but also to enlighten the spirit by understanding the fate of the narrative's ancient characters.

51. And on this, I fully concur with Wajdenbaum (*Argonauts of the Desert*, 14–16): the Hebrew Bible is the recipient of Greek influences, and not the other way around, and that should count as an important chronological datum.

52. Lemche, 'Good and Bad in History', 140. Yet, as Lemche himself argues, 'even though the biblical historians received an education, which may have been very similar to that of their Greek and Roman colleagues, they remained Jewish sectarians' (*ibid*., 139). Further on this, N. P. Lemche, '"Because They Have Cast away the Law of the Lord of Hosts" – or: "We and the Rest of the World!": The Authors Who "Wrote" the Old Testament', *SJOT* 17 (2003), 268–90; and Pfoh, *The Emergence of Israel in Ancient Palestine*, 155–8.

2

Editing the Bible: Alexandria or Babylon?

Étienne Nodet, o.p.

The recent discovery of a large Israelite shrine on Mount Gerizim[1] may have some significant consequences, especially in challenging an overall Judean bias in biblical studies. After assessing some biblical clues as to the importance of Shechem, this chapter aims at considering together three very different problems, as follows:

(1) Why is the Samaritan Bible so short? It contains only the Pentateuch and a *Chronicle* of little authority, which begins with a shorter form of Joshua, poorly preserved, but somewhat akin to the version used by Josephus.[2]
(2) How can we explain the huge differences between the stories of Ezra, Nehemiah and 1 Maccabees, which have definite Babylonian connections and whose viewpoints are strictly legal and national, and the Prophets as a whole, including the 'post-exilic' layers, the general mindset of which is both ethical-universal and eschatological? Stating that this reflects various successive periods is somewhat begging the question of accurate dating.
(3) At least since the writings of the priest Aristobulus, in the second century BCE, a common view held by Jews, and later by early Christian writers,[3] was that the Greek philosophers, especially Plato, borrowed from Moses. Eusebius offers numerous analogies between the *Laws* and various bibli-

1. See Yitzhak Magen, 'The Dating of the First Phase of the Samaritan Temple on Mount Gerizim in Light of the Archaeological Evidence', *Judah and the Judeans in the Fourth Century BCE*, Oded Lipschits *et al.* (eds) (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2007), 157–212; for a fuller statement, see Étienne Nodet, *Samaritains, Juifs, temples* (Paris: Gabalda, 2010).
2. See Étienne Nodet, *Les Antiquités juives de Josèphe, II: Livres IV–V* (Paris: Cerf, 1995), xiii–xiv. John MacDonald, *The Samaritan Chronicle No. II (or: Sepher ha-Yamim) From Joshua to Nebuchadnezzar*, BZAW, 107 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1969), *a. l.*
3. Jewish and Christian apologists strove to claim the high antiquity of their traditions, see Arthur J. Droge, *Homer or Moses?* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1989), 1–11. For Hellenistic (Egyptian) Jews as philosophers, see too Erich S. Gruen, 'Jews and Greeks as Philosophers: A Challenge to Otherness', *The Other in Second Temple Judaism*, Daniel C. Harlow *et al.* (eds) (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011), 402–22.

cal precepts. However, this would imply early translations, which hardly squares with the available data.

The hypothesis outlined here, which suggests an answer to these problems, is that the final shape of most of the Hebrew Bible was carried out at the library of Alexandria, in two major steps: first the Pentateuch in the third century BCE for all the Israelites, and then a Jewish library including the Prophets and many writings in the second century BCE, after the final split between the Samaritans of Shechem and the Jews, which occurred some time after the Maccabean crisis.

The main sources to be used, besides Josephus, will be Ben Sira and the *Letter of Aristeas*. It will be necessary to discuss at length the situation of Judaism and its parties around the Maccabean crisis and to assess the importance of the Onias temple in Egypt.

Shechem and the Samaritans as Israelites of old

According to two classical passages, the Samaritans were either false Israelites with a peculiar cult combining Yahwism with worship of foreign gods, or half Jews with a watered-down Torah. First, according to 2 Kings 17:28-40 MT, the settlers brought in from five nations after the deportation of Samaria in 721 BCE had to learn some local Yahwism at Bethel, but they still performed their early worship 'till this day'. Second, Josephus tells us (*Ant.* 11:302–45) that at the end of the Persian period, all those married to Samaritan women were expelled from Judea but welcomed by Sanballat, the governor of Samaria. Then the latter was granted the right to build the Gerizim temple by Alexander, who was besieging Tyre (332). Eventually, the apostates of the Jewish nation moved there.

All this is definitely Judean, for apologetic reasons that will appear below. First of all, the very name 'Samaritan' is misleading, for it refers to the city of Samaria, founded by King Omri in the ninth century BCE as the capital of the northern kingdom (1 Kgs 16:24). Indeed, some inscriptions of the eighth or seventh centuries mentioning 'Yhwh of Samaria and his Ashera' show that the Yahwism of Samaria was peculiar.[4] It may be better to call it 'Samarian', while the Samaritans referred to here called themselves 'Sidonian of Shechem' (*Ant.* 12:257), underlining their local origin.

As for the Assyrian settlers, the LXX says, on the contrary, that 'till this day they worship the Lord' and are faithful to the commandments given to the sons of Jacob, 'whom he named Israel'. There is some ambiguity about these faithful,

4. Discovered far away from Samaria, at Kh. el-Qom and Kuntillet Ajrud, see Ze'ev Meshel, *Kuntillet 'Ajrud: A Religious Centre From the Time of the Judaean Monarchy on the Border of Sinai* (Jerusalem: Israel Museum, 1978); André Lemaire, 'Who or What Was Yahweh's Asherah? Startling New Inscriptions from Two Different Sites Reopen the Debate About the Meaning of Asherah', *BAR* 10(6) (1984), 2–51; P. Kyle McCarter, 'Aspects of the Religion of the Israelite Monarchy: Biblical and Epigraphic Data', *Ancient Israelite Religion*, Patrick D. Miller *et al.* (eds) (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1987), 137–55.

for they can be either the settlers, or some surviving Israelites of old. This LXX version should be preferred, for Josephus, who paraphrases a Hebrew source broadly akin to the MT for 1–2 Kings,[5] nevertheless speaks of the faithfulness to God of the descendants of the settlers 'till this day' (*Ant.* 9:288–91); this indicates that the actual MT displays a Judean or Jewish reworking.[6] The very name Jacob, as well as Bethel, points to Shechem, and not to Samaria. Interestingly, Moses is not mentioned, which could hint at some pre-Mosaic laws.[7]

Now Josephus' Gerizim story is clearly contradicted by the archaeological discoveries. Moreover, he calls 'elders' the ones who cast away the many priests and laymen married to Samaritan women. These 'elders' are reformers, who wanted to change an established custom that can be termed 'traditional Israelite', with two temples. Their purpose was very close to the action of Ezra and Nehemiah,[8] two Babylonians, who expelled the foreign wives even among ranking priests (Ezra 10:18-44; Neh. 13:28). It is to be noted that Nehemiah, as a reformer, secretly came to Jerusalem to inspect a portion of the southern city wall (Neh. 2:11-16), then clashed with Israelite foes, within Jerusalem and around it (Neh. 6:1-19) when he endeavoured to rebuild it to enforce Sabbath observance, most probably around the Ophel only.

In a very different context, another allusion to the same 'established Israelite custom' can be found in 2 Maccabees 5:22–6:2: at the beginning of the persecution, Antiochus IV sends governors to harm the nation, one at Jerusalem, one at Gerizim. In other words the 'nation' has two temples, a feature which does not disturb the author (or abbreviator). But this view seems to contradict Deuteronomy's demand of one holy place only. However, one can argue that it is called the 'chosen place', without a name. Josephus, in paraphrasing the Law, speaks of the 'city in which they shall establish the temple' (*Ant.* 4:203), without venturing to name it. Even rabbinic tradition displays some flexibility: the place can be changed 'if a prophet so decides' (*Sifré Num.* §70 on Deut. 12:13-14).[9]

However, other details clearly give precedence to Shechem, a place connected with Abraham and Jacob, who built altars there, while Jerusalem is not mentioned in the Pentateuch.[10] The 'navel of the land' is close to Shechem

5. See Étienne Nodet, *Les Antiquités juives de Josèphe, V: Livres X et XI* (Paris: Cerf, 2010), xxxvii–liii.
6. Here, as elsewhere, Josephus follows the inconsistency of his sources, see Reinhard Pummer, *The Samaritans in Flavius Josephus*, TSAJ, 129 (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2009).
7. A shorter account of the same story is given in 2 Kgs 18:9-12, which ignores the settlers but mentions Moses' commandments; for a discussion on the relationship between the two versions, see Jean-Daniel Macchi, *Les Samaritains. Histoire d'une légende* (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1994), 47–72.
8. See Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Judaism, the First Phase: The Place of Ezra and Nehemiah in the Origins of Judaism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009).
9. The likely literary reference is the altar built by Elijah on Mount Carmel (1 Kgs 18:30).
10. In Gen. 14:18, Melchizedek is מלך שלם (LXX βασιλεὺς Σαλημ). Josephus transcribes Σολυμᾶ and states that the place was later called Ἱεροσόλυμα ('Jerusalem, Holy Solyma') by adding the Greek prefix ἱερο- (*Ant.* 1:180; *Ag. Ap.* 1:174).

(Judg. 9:37). Upon their entry into Canaan, the sons of Israel are ordered to put a blessing on Mount Gerizim and a curse on Mount Ebal (Deut. 11:29) – that is, on the mountains on both sides of Shechem.[11] The unnamed 'chosen place' of the legal section that follows (Deut. 12:5 etc.) does suggest a location in the vicinity of Shechem, and it is not entirely unspecified, because of a textual variant: most witnesses read 'the place Yhwh will choose [יבחר]', an announcement echoed in Solomon's prayer, quoting God (1 Kgs 8:16): 'Since the day that I brought my people Israel out of Egypt, I chose no city in all the tribes of Israel to build a house, that my name might be there, but I chose David [&c].' This is obviously a Judean view, but the Samaritan version consistently reads 'the place Yhwh has chosen [בחר]'. This is not just a 'samaritanism', for it has been shown from ancient translations dependent on the Old Greek that such is the original text.[12] Moreover, the quotation of Deuteronomy 30:4 in Nehemiah 1:9 does read 'I have chosen [בחרתי]'. About Solomon, it is remarkable that, after his death, his son Rehoboam had to go to Shechem, for 'all Israel' had come there to proclaim him king (1 Kgs 12:1), as if Solomon's reign and works in Jerusalem were of no consequence for 'Israel'. In fact, he may have been a kind of Phoenician vassal, for 1 Kings 5:15 LXX reads 'Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants to anoint Solomon in place of his father David'; moreover, Solomon's temple has nothing to do with Moses' laws, and its dating is given in Phoenician months.[13]

More interesting is the last speech of Joshua at Shechem, which begins with Abraham (Josh. 24:2), and mentions Moses only in the context of the Exodus from Egypt, but not as a lawgiver (v. 5). At the end, he asks the tribes whether they agree to worship Yhwh, an unexpected question within this context (Josh. 24:15). Thereafter the conclusion states (vv. 25–6a): 'So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and made for them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem. And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God.' So Joshua assumes the role of a lawgiver for newcomers. This is even more obvious in the Samaritan version, which is much shorter: Joshua's speech begins[14] with the invitation to worship Yhwh (v. 14), and the people's reply omits the historical confession (vv. 17-21a). Incidentally, there are some similarities with the story of the settlers in 2 Kings 17, who are newcomers in Bethel–Shechem, and with written laws unconnected to Moses.

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11. This is done later with Josh. (8:30-35), and a rabbinic tradition (*m.Sota* 7:5), quite reluctant to give any meaning to Samaritan places, states that the Israelites only stayed there one day, for it is said 'on the day when you cross the Jordan' (Deut. 7:2).
12. See Adrian Schenker, 'Le Seigneur choisira-t-il le lieu de son nom ou l'a-t-il choisi? L'apport de la Bible grecque ancienne à l'histoire du texte samaritain et massorétique', *Scripture in Transition: Essays on Septuagint, Hebrew Bible, and Dead Sea Scrolls in Honour of Raija Sollamo*, Anssi Voitila & Jutta M. Jokiranta (eds), JSJS, 126 (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 339–51.
13. See Étienne Nodet, 'On the Biblical "Hidden" Calendar', *ZAW* 124 (2012), 583–97.
14. A quotation of Deut. 4:34 is prefixed, mentioning the exit from Egypt, see Moses Gaster, 'Das Buch Josua in hebräisch-samaritanischer Rezension', *ZDMG* 62 (1908), 209–79 (text) and 494–549 (discussion); it is the first part of the *Chronicle II* of John Macdonald, *The Theology of the Samaritans* (London: SCM Press, 1964), 44–9.

A Babylonian party in Jerusalem

An ancillary result of this assessment of the traditional Israelites at Shechem is the presence in Jerusalem, before the Maccabean crisis, of a party of reformers, connected with Babylon, and with Ezra and Nehemiah. It should be stressed that the returnees from exile, whom the latter led, have a poor knowledge of the law of Moses. It is only when Ezra proclaims this law in Jerusalem that they discover and perform the Feast of Booths (Neh. 8:1-14), but yet they ignore the Day of Atonement (cf. Neh. 9:1). According to Nehemiah 13:1-3, they discovered Deuteronomy in Jerusalem, and, as a consequence 'excluded all foreigners [כל ערבע, lit. "every mixture"] from Israel', imposing an exclusivity far beyond the authority quoted, which only demands selected exclusions, or, more accurately, forbids some admissions (Deut. 23:2-3). In other words, Scripture is used to justify a custom alien to it.

This definitely reminds one of the Babylonian connections of the later Pharisees and their ancestral, oral laws. Hillel the Elder, a Babylonian and, according to tradition, a father of normative rabbinic Judaism, lived during the reign of Herod the Great. There is a famous story that suggests he was somewhat unaware of the traditional rules for Passover, a very biblical feast (*j.Pes* 6:1, p. 33a). The *Mishna* in Hebrew, published around 200 CE in Galilee, was sent only to Babylonian schools where it seems to have been immediately accepted, but there is no indication that by that time it was intended to reach the Greek-speaking Jews. One of its tractates, *Megila* ('Scroll'), deals with the copying, translating and reading of the Esther scroll for the feast of Purim, and, by analogy, with the proper preparation and use of the Torah scroll. The order of importance is significant, for Purim celebrates the end of a persecution in an eastern country without any hint of it giving rise to an emigration, whereas the first Passover, in Egypt, is the starting point of a migration to a Promised Land. In other words, we have another hint that the biblical Passover was not very well known in Babylonia.

The prologue of the *Mishna* tractate *Pirqey Abot* gives the rabbinic view of the authoritative tradition chain, from Moses down through later sages; one salient point is that the oral Torah was given to Moses, which means that it does not depend on the written Torah.[15] Between the Prophets and Simon the Righteous, who has been identified with the high priest Simon son of Onias[16] (about 200 BCE, Sir. 50:1), there is an important body called 'The Men of the Great Assembly' (אנשי כנסת הגדולה), who are credited in other texts with major achievements that no later authority can undo: among other things, they wrote and enforced the books of Ezekiel, the Twelve (the Minor Prophets as one book),

15. Later, R. Aqiba and other sages were afraid to have 'two Torahs', one written and one oral, and strove to keep both in connection with the help of hermeneutic rules (see *b.Zeb.* 13a).
16. According to *m.Para* 3:5, he would have been the first to sacrifice the Red Cow (see Num. 19:1), and one may wonder what was the authority of this passage before him.

Daniel and Esther (*b.BabaB* 15a), which includes the feast of Purim (*b.Meg* 2a); they fixed the synagogue prayers (*b.Sanh* 104b).

In fact, this body was not a permanent institution, but a group of founding members, including eighty-five elders and some prophets (*j.Meg* 1:5, p. 70a). The figure fits the number of the names on the written agreement quoted in Nehemiah 10:1-27, hence the identification;[17] the first named is Nehemiah. They take an oath to walk in God's law, 'which was given through Moses, God's servant'. However, in the list of commandments that follows, some items do not match Moses' written laws. For instance, for the Sabbath and the festivals, the only precept indicated is the prohibition of trading with the peoples of the land (10:31); this is exactly what Nehemiah strove to enforce in Nehemiah 13:15-22, with a stress on the holiness of the city walls. (The same core feature appears in Jer. 17:19-27, with some additions.) Here too, the repeated phrase 'Moses' Law', together with the presence of a large assembly around the eighty-five, is a literary effect, probably due to the Chronicler, which is intended to cover up, or legitimize, customs from other origins.

Thus, according to the available sources, this 'Babylonian' party surfaced in Jerusalem during the Persian period, but after Jeshua the high priest and Zerubbabel, the first leaders of the returnees. It is significant that in his gallery of biblical characters, Ben Sira praises them (Sir. 49:11–12), but ignores Ezra and Esther. Nehemiah is mentioned, but only as a builder, not as a reformer (v. 13). This is not a mere abbreviation, for Josephus, in his biblical paraphrase, knew him the same way as a builder (*Ant.* 11:159–83); he did not use the canonical forms of Ezra and Nehemiah.[18]

In its beginnings, this party was not a large one. According to Nehemiah 2:11-16 and 6:15, Nehemiah swiftly repaired or built the wall and its gates, around a small portion of the city (Ophel, 'City of David'), while the major restoration work was done without him by the high priest Elyashib (Neh. 3:1-32). But the party eventually had the upper hand in Jerusalem, and was intimately involved with the Maccabean crisis.

Jerusalem and Heliopolis

This Maccabean crisis had various features, which are difficult to disentangle because of the discrepancy of the sources. We shall be content here to highlight some aspects related to the parties in Judea, Samaria (Shechem) and Egypt.

Despite a certain amount of editing, the Book of 2 Maccabees has in its core very specific views, termed above 'established Israelite customs' (§I). It praises the high priest Onias of old, son of Simon the Righteous, and displays some respect for the Gerizim temple. Its main concern is the presence of God

17. See Elias J. Bickerman, 'Viri magnae congregationis', *RB* 55 (1948), 397–402.
18. See Nodet, *Les Antiquités juives de Josèphe, V*, lvi–lxiii.

in the Jerusalem temple,[19] and its hoped restoration with an heir of Onias: in 2 Maccabees 15:11-12, Judas Maccabee reports a dream in which he saw Onias interceding for the Jewish people, with the blessing of Jeremiah. The focus of the book is on Jerusalem, and not on any territory or state around it. In fact, it is mainly the foundation story of a 'Nikanor day' on Adar 13th, from the name of a Syrian general defeated by Judas Maccabee. As a consequence, the whole story concludes that 'from that time on, the Hebrews (not "the Jews") had the city in their power' (2 Macc. 15:37). The order of the chapters is somewhat distorted, for according to the letters quoted in 2 Maccabees 11:13-38,[20] the persecution ended in Xanthicus or Nissan 164 BCE – that is, one month later, in the spring. All this took place more than ten years before the first Hasmonean high priest, but we cannot conclude that the book was written before the appearance of that dynasty.

However, an awkward passage, inserted after the story of Antiochus IV's death (164), relates the recovery and cleansing of the Temple by Judas Maccabee on Kislev 25th of the same year, in the autumn. This victory is commemorated 'as in the feast of Booths, remembering that not long before (three months) they had held the feast of Booths wandering in the mountains'. This explanation hardly makes sense, all the more since there was then a high priest in charge, Menelaus (173–163). In fact, the insertion has been prompted by the twofold letter introduced as a prologue of the book[21] (2 Macc. 1:1-10), by which the Jews of Jerusalem urge, in 124, the Jews of Egypt to keep the 'feast of the pitching of the Temple' (σκηνοπηγία) in Kislev – that is, the Dedication (חנכה). The letter is a reminder that quotes a previous one to the same effect, sent in 142 BCE. The editor of the insertion understood σκηνοπηγία according to its accepted meaning in the LXX (and Josephus), 'feast of Booths', and composed the passage accordingly.[22]

These letters show that the Egyptian Jews were quite reluctant to accept the Hasmonean restoration. Their dates are meaningful. In 142, the high priest Simon (144–134) was officially recognized by Rome (1 Macc. 15:15-24), which was eager to control the Mediterranean east, after the fall of Carthage in 146. The little state of Judea was a kind of buffer zone, preventing any union of Egypt and Syria.

The later date falls under John Hyrcanus (134–104), who, after the death of Antiochus VII Sidetes (139–129), felt free to conquer Idumea (*Ant.* 13:249–53). According to Josephus, John Hyrcanus destroyed the Gerizim temple some time after 129, but, according to some coins from various locations, subsequent to

19. See Robert Doran, *Temple Propaganda: The Purpose and Character of 2 Maccabees*, CBQ MS, 12 (Washington, DC: The Catholic Biblical Association, 1981), who observes that there is no hostility against the heathen.
20. Their genuineness has been shown by Christian Habicht, *2. Makkabäerbuch*, Jüdische Schriften aus hellenistischer Zeit, 1(3) (Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn Vlg, 1976), 179–84.
21. See Elias J. Bickerman, 'Ein jüdischer Festbrief vom Jahre 124 v. Chr.', *Studies in Jewish and Christian History II*, Elias J. Bickerman, AGAJU, 9 (Leiden: Brill, 1980), 136–58.
22. See Étienne Nodet, *La crise maccabéenne* (Paris: Cerf, 2005), 158–79.

a civil war between Antiochus VIII and Antiochus IX (*c*.113–112), after which the Seleucid dominion over Judea essentially disappeared.[23] Hyrcanus' successors took the title of king. It is even possible that the second letter was related to a persecution of the Egyptian Jews by Ptolemy VII Physcon (145–117), as reported by Josephus[24] (*Ag. Ap.* 2:53–5).

To sum up, the editing undergone by 2 Maccabees brought it closer to the Hasmonean trend. If we remove it, it reflects a traditional, Israelite party position quite different from the returnees of Ezra–Nehemiah, who rejected any contact with local Israelites (Ezra 4:1-3; Neh. 6:1-14; 13:28).

In contrast, the Book of 1 Maccabees is the founding story of the Hasmonean dynasty; it ignores the priests preceding the crisis and ends when John Hyrcanus succeeds his father Simon as high priest. It reports the desecration of the Temple and, three years later, the broadly magnified action of Judas Maccabee on Kislev 25th, 164, commemorated by the feast of Dedication. Judas was an heir of Nehemiah (2 Macc. 2:13), and the Samaritans ('Sidonians of Shechem') strove to sever any and all ties with these types of Jews.[25] Afterwards, the war went on for a long time, but there was a gap of seven years between the death of Alcimus (159 BCE, 1 Macc. 9:56), the last high priest regularly appointed by Seleucid authority, and the promotion of Jonathan as the first Hasmonean high priest (152 BCE, 1 Macc. 10:1).

Josephus knows the gap. In his summary of the high priesthood since Aaron, he mentions it; however, he also says that just before it, when Alcimus was appointed, Onias, the heir of the dynasty preceding the crisis, fled to Egypt. Onias obtained from King Ptolemy VI the permission to build a temple like the one of Jerusalem in the district of Heliopolis,[26] and received the title of high priest (*Ant.* 20:235–7). In other words, during those seven years, the only Jewish high priest was in Egypt.[27] This explains why the Hasmoneans, of a much lesser pedigree, had difficulties in being accepted by the Egyptian Jews.

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23. See Reinhard Pummer, *The Samaritans in Flavius Josephus*, TSAJ, 129 (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2009), 281–320.
24. The incident is wrongly dated by 3 Maccabees 6:36, under Ptolemy IV (222–205 BCE).
25. In a letter to Antiochus IV in 166 BCE (*Ant.* 12:257–64); its genuineness has been shown by Elias J. Bickerman, 'Un document relatif à la persécution d'Antiochus IV Épiphane', *Studies in Jewish and Christian History II*, Elias J. Bickerman (Leiden: Brill, 1980), 105–35.
26. Since the excavations of William Flinders Petrie (1890) it is admitted that the Onias temple was close to T. el-Yehudiyeh, 13 km north from Heliopolis. Some doubts have been clearly refuted by Joan E. Taylor, 'A Second Temple in Egypt. The Evidence for the Zadokite Temple of Egypt', *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 29 (1998), 297–321, but her wording 'Zadokite' for the Oniad dynasty is unfortunate, for no Zadokite dynasty since the time of Solomon can be established, and the later Sadducees have nothing to do with any priestly genealogy; see Nodet, *La crise maccabéenne*, 243–54.
27. As suggested on different grounds by Erich S. Gruen, 'The Origins and Objectives of Onias' Temple', *Scripta Classica Israelica* 16 (1997), 46–70. There is no reason to surmise that the gap was filled up by a legitimate 'Zadokite' high priest, whose memory would have been erased from Hasmonean records, because he fled to the wilderness

In *War* 7:423–32, Josephus has given a longer story of this temple. This Onias, 'son of Simon, one of the high priests of Jerusalem', fled from the persecution of Antiochus IV. He came to Ptolemy VI and told him that if he were allowed to build a temple in Egypt, he would rally to him the whole Jewish people; he wanted to outdo the Jews of Jerusalem – that is, the nascent Hasmonean dynasty. Ptolemy agreed, out of hatred of Antiochus, the ruler of Jerusalem, who had made two attempts to invade Egypt (in 169 and 168 BCE; see 1 Macc. 1:16-20; 2 Macc. 5:1-14). Josephus adds that Onias was bound to be aware of a prophecy of Isaiah (Isa. 19:18-21):

> In that day five cities in the land of Egypt will be speaking the language of Canaan … one will be called the City of Destruction [MT הרס; versions and 1QIsa[a] חרס 'of the Sun', but LXX ασεδεκ 'of Justice] … They will even worship with sacrifice and offering.

Josephus' comment implies the reading 'City of the Sun' (Heliopolis), which is primitive and has echoes in the Pentateuch: Joseph's wife was a daughter of Potiphera priest of On (Gen. 41:45 MT און; LXX 'Heliopolis'). According to Exodus 1:11, the Israelites in Egypt built storage cities, Pithom and Raamses; the LXX adds another place name, transcribed Ων, then translated (Ηελίου πόλις). The very name 'Onias' refers to that place.[28] The variants witness serious controversies: a disaster for the MT, which reflects the Hasmonean and rabbinic view, that the holiness of Jerusalem cannot be cancelled[29] (*m.Meg* 1:11). On the contrary, the LXX is careful to transcribe an easy Hebrew word, perhaps faked, which is normally attached to Jerusalem (see Isa. 1:26; 62:1; Jer. 33:6).

The weakness of early Hasmonean Jerusalem

After the Maccabean crisis, thus, the position of the Jerusalem temple was precarious, from a Jewish point of view. Moreover, Josephus relates an additional threat over Jerusalem (*Ant.* 12:10 and 13:74–9): a quarrel erupted between Jews and Samaritans at Alexandria about the only legitimate temple (ἱερόν) according to Scripture – that is, to the Pentateuch. Both parties requested Ptolemy VI's judgment, and a death penalty for the losers. The names of the pleaders are given, which suggests that the dispute did take place: Sabaeus and Theodosius for the Samaritans, Messalamus and Andronicus for the Jews. The latter spoke

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and became the Qumran Teacher of Righteousness. This view is still held, see Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, 'Demetrius I and the Teacher of Righteousness (I Macc., X, 25–45)', *RB* 83 (1976), 400–20; Charlotte Hempel, *The Damascus Text*, Companions to the Qumran Scroll, 1 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 60–65.

28. The LXX form Ονιας (1 Macc. 12:7; Sir. 50:1), like Ησαιας for ישעיהו, may witness a Yahwist suffix אוניהו or אוניה; *m.Men* 13:10 reads חוניו (for חוניהו).
29. There was a controversy after 70 BCE, for the Onias temple then had a renewed authority for many people (*War* 7:423–32).

first and argued from the successions of the high priests and the age and fame of the Jerusalem temple, for all the kings of Asia had honoured it with their donations, while the Gerizim was utterly ignored; so they persuaded the king to rule that the temple at Jerusalem was built according to the laws of Moses. The speeches of the Samaritans are not given, but they lost, which indicates that politics prevailed, and not the Bible. In fact, the Jews of Alexandria were afraid of the contest for very good reasons, as we can now see. The attack came from the Samaritans. Incidentally, such a trial could imply a Greek translation of the Pentateuch agreed upon by all, but not necessarily, since the king's decision ran against any biblical argument.

The incident is not dated, but it is reported between the death of King Demetrius I of Antioch in 150 BCE (*Ant.* 13:61) and the wedding of his rival and successor Alexander Balas with a daughter of Ptolemy VI, which took place the same year at Ptolemais-Akko (*Ant.* 13:80–82). This marriage was providential for Jonathan, the first Hasmonean high priest, who was invited and who was careful to present both kings with magnificent gifts (1 Macc. 10:59-66). In 152, Alexander had returned from exile and claimed to be the legitimate king of Syria, against Demetrius. He had heard of Jonathan's military prowess and, in his pretended capacity, appointed him high priest to secure his help for the civil war. Demetrius immediately sought to break this alliance by granting Judea substantial fiscal privileges (1 Macc. 10:6, 25-45). It therefore appears that Jonathan's high priesthood was definitively shaky, at least till Demetrius' death. This provides us with a context for the Samaritan quarrel and the fear of the Egyptian Jews. To date it around 150 following Josephus, preferably before Demetrius' death, makes sense, but it could have occurred at any time during the seven-year gap that followed Alcimus' death in 159.

Thus there was a period during which the Egyptian Jews perceived a twofold danger: the Samaritan threat prompted by the double weakness of Jerusalem, with its hardly biblical temple and its questionable high priesthood. In fact, the situation in Jerusalem was complex. Jonathan was killed in 143 BCE, then his brother Simon became high priest, and in 142, the year of the Roman recognition, 'the yoke of the heathen was taken away from Israel' (1 Macc. 13:41). In Elul 140, the people of Jerusalem wrote an honorific decree on tables of brass to 'Simon, son of Mattathias, of the posterity of Yoyarib', expounding his deeds as well as Jonathan's, but neither Judas nor his recovery of the Temple are mentioned (1 Macc. 14:27-49), while in 2 Maccabees, he is the only one who struggled against the persecution, and he is never said to be of priestly descent.

As the head of the Hasideans (2 Macc. 14:6), Simon was a heir of Nehemiah (cf. 2 Macc. 2:13-14), and it is quite possible that his being a son of Mattathias was just a literary device to give some legitimacy to the Hasmonean dynasty, for it is said in the decree that Simon will be 'high priest for ever, until a faithful prophet arise', which shows that he was not of obviously legitimate descent. In *War* 1:31–53, Josephus had given, independently from 1–2 Maccabees, a first-hand account of the crisis and the subsequent events: the persecution lasted three and a half years (as in Dan. 9:27 and 12:11); there is no feast of Dedication; Jonathan was never a high priest; Mattathias, a priest from Modin, was plainly

'son of Asamonius (τοῦ ἀσαμωνίου)'. That name has the form of an adjective, like the Hebrew חשמונאי, which may be related to the town חשמון, in the territory of the tribe of Judah (Josh. 15:27); the place is omitted by the LXX, maybe significantly. This would imply an obscure origin.

Judas Maccabee may be viewed as the ancestor of the later Zealots, a branch of the Pharisees, who arose in Galilee after the beginning of the Roman dominion, in 63 CE (*Ant.* 14:159–60).[30] But in spite of the strength of the Hasmonean dynasty at the end of the second century, this 'military' religious trend was not accepted by all the Pharisees or Babylonian Jews. Daniel 11:32-5, after a summary of Antiochus IV's persecutions, criticizes those who waged war against him, and ignores the Dedication.[31] Later, rabbinic tradition has ignored both Antiochus IV and Judas Maccabee, and rejected the original Hebrew version of 1 Maccabees (Eusebius, *HE* 6.25.2, quoting Origen), of which Josephus used a peculiar form.

Ben Sira and the Hebrew holy books

Some time after 144 BCE (see 1 Macc. 11:54), when the high priest Jonathan's position was firmly established, he sent a letter to the Spartans, in which he recalled an old friendship between them and the high priest Onias (see §VII below), and offered to renew it 'though we need none of these things, for we have the holy books of Scripture in our hands to comfort us' (1 Macc. 12:8-9). The genuineness of such a letter may be questioned, but it is clear that its main goal is to bridge a gap between the previous dynasty and Jonathan. We learn from a letter of the Spartans that they accepted the proposal, but only later, in 142, under Simon (1 Macc. 14:16-23). Onias, like the Samaritans, had the Pentateuch, so the 'holy books' that are referred to – another token of legitimacy – are something additional that the Samaritans never had, all the more so since the quarrel at Alexandria had occurred some ten years before.

The book of Ben Sira may provide some light on the origin of these books. In his prologue, the translator states that he arrived in Egypt 'in the 38th year of the late king Euergetes'; he found there the work of his grandfather and endeavoured to translate it. In fact, he gives two dates: first, his arrival in the thirty-eighth year of Ptolemy Euergetes Physcon (170–117 BCE), that is, 132 BCE; second, the publication (ἐκδόσθαι, line 33) of his work after 117 BCE. Ben Sira found the Hebrew book in Egypt, say at Alexandria, and there is sufficient reason to consider that it was written there, for it was unknown in Jerusalem. First of all, there are some

30. See Martin Hengel, *Die Zeloten: Untersuchungen zur jüdischen Freiheitsbewegung in der Zeit von Herodes I. bis 70 n. Chr.* (Leiden: Brill, 1961); Schürer-Vermes, II: 598–606.

31. Because of this, some scholars want to date the book around 165 BCE (before the Dedication), but this is impossible, for in Dan. 11:30, the כיתים *Kittim* are the Romans (LXX 'Ρωμαιοι), a later meaning, while earlier the word designated the Greeks (e. g. Alexander, 1 Macc. 1:1), see Étienne Nodet, 'Les *Kittim*, les Romains et Daniel', *RB* 118 (2011), 260–68.

signs that the great library did include some Hebrew and Chaldean shelves. Strabo reports (*Geogr.* 17.1.8) that, since Ptolemy I, the library strove to acquire every kind of book, and the Museum accommodated scholars from everywhere and provided them with excellent studying conditions. More specifically, the *Letter of Aristeas*, in spite of its legendary features, gives an interesting detail (§30): in his petition to King Ptolemy II, the librarian Demetrius complains that he only has poor copies of the laws of the Jews 'according to the people in the know'. This implies the presence of learned Israelites in Alexandria. We may add that the Phoenician idiom, quite close to classical Hebrew, was still in use.

Now the book of Ben Sira, written for believers ('God-Fearers') seeking wisdom, has three main parts, somewhat interwoven: wisdom precepts, a gallery of biblical characters, and a high reverence for the Jerusalem temple, especially with the prominent high priest Simon, son of Onias. Some details are significant here: wisdom lies in Moses' law, termed 'the book of the covenant of the most high God' (Sir. 24:23); the Temple, offerings and sacrifices are of the utmost importance (Sir. 7:31; 34:18-19; etc.), but neither the Sabbath observance nor the dietary laws are mentioned; and purity is mainly taken in a moral sense. The calendar is lunar (43:6-8), which indicates a definite respect for the Syrian tradition and the Temple custom. This is quite different from what we read in Ezra–Nehemiah, where the main tenets are the genealogic purity and the Sabbath observance in towns protected by legal walls; the returnees from exile with Ezra and Nehemiah are hardly involved in Temple worship, and have a poor knowledge of the Pentateuch, as observed above.

Some biographical allusions give us some strokes to sketch a portrait of Jesus Ben Sira. He was in Jerusalem in his youth, and then he travelled abroad, looking for wisdom (Sir. 51:13–14). From his experience, he knows that 'because of unrighteous dealings, injuries, and riches obtained by deceit, the kingdom moves from one people to another' (10:8). He has been persecuted or accused (12:10; 25:7). There is a paradox: besides his reverence for the high priest Simon, who restored the shrine and presided over impressive worship, he prays to God that he may restore Jerusalem with its Temple and gather together all the tribes of Jacob (and not only Judah; Sir. 36:10-17). So he may have known the high priest Simon in his youth, but he is now facing a crisis looming in Jerusalem. Moreover, he scorns the stupid people (גרי נבל) living in Shechem, which 'is not even a nation' (50:25-6).[32]

32. For different approaches, see James D. Purvis, 'Ben Sira and the Foolish People of Shechem', *JNES* 24 (1965), 88–94; Jean-Sébastien Rey, 'La conception de l'étranger dans les différentes versions du livre de Ben Sira', *Identité et altérité. La norme en question. Hommage à Pierre-Marie Beaude*, Jacques Fantino (ed.) (Paris: Cerf, 2010), 273–94; Matthew Goff, '"The Foolish Nation That Dwells in Shechem": Ben Sira on Shechem and the Other Peoples in Palestine', *The Other in Second Temple Judaism: Essays in Honor of John J. Collins*, Daniel C. Harlow *et al.* (eds) (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011), 173–88.

All this is quite consistent, if we admit that Ben Sira was exiled in Alexandria after the Maccabean crisis,[33] and wrote there at the time of the quarrel with the Samaritans.[34] He cannot accept the 'Babylonian' party of Judas and is not interested in the Onias temple, for his way of speaking of David and Solomon (47:2-22) shows that his dream is to restore Jerusalem as the capital of the whole Israel, but through priestly rule, following Simon son of Onias; his longest notice is on Aaron, who is granted 'authority in the statutes and judgments, that he should teach Jacob the testimonies' (45:17). Unlike the pre-Maccabean priests and the Samaritans, Ben Sira knows many of the biblical books, but their authority is not assessed, and they may still be somehow in the making. One century later, Philo does not venture very much beyond the Pentateuch: he ignores the Israelite history after Moses, and his perusal of the Prophets and Psalms is scanty.[35] For him, David was a poet (*Conf. ling.* §149) and Solomon a sage, disciple of Moses (*Congr.* §177), so he is aware of some wisdom literature.

As for the purpose of Ben Sira, beyond teaching wisdom and dreaming of a restoration, he obviously wants the biblical portraits to be known, but since they were unknown in both Samaria and Jerusalem before the Maccabean crisis, we can go one step further, and conclude that he wanted to promote the relevant books to Jewish Hebrew readers. A sign of this is that he mentions 'the twelve Prophets' without saying anything specific about them; for him, this is just one book (49:10). Incidentally, his grandson, who later translated the work for the Greek-speaking Jews, warns in his prologue that the translations of the Law, the Prophets and the other books differ not a little from the original.

Such a statement hardly squares with the *Letter of Aristeas*, which proclaims that the Greek translation of the Pentateuch was perfect. It is indeed legendary,

33. Following a proposal by Philippe Guillaume, 'New Light on the Nebiim from Alexandria: A Chronography to Replace the Deuteronomistic History', *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 5 (2005), 169–215.

34. The book is usually dated around 180 BCE – for example, Patrick W. Skehan & Alexander A. di Lella, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira*, Anchor Bible, 39 (New York: Doubleday, 1987), 9; Maurice Gilbert, 'Siracide', *DBS* 12 (1996), col. 1402–5; *idem*, *Les cinq livres des Sages* (Paris: Cerf, 2003), 155–6; Gabiele Boccaccini, 'Where Does Ben Sira Belong? The Canon, Literary Genre, Intellectual Movement, and Social Group of a Zadokite Document', *Studies in the Book of Ben Sira*, Géza G. Xeravits & József Zsengellér (eds), JSJSup, 127 (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 21–41, and other introductions. The two main reasons for this early dating are: first, there was no Hebrew at Alexandria; second, Ben Sira wrote in Jerusalem before the Maccabean crisis, since he does not know of it; but this is clearly begging the question. As for the chronology, the grandfather may well have written a book some twenty years before the grandson's discovery; the latter may then have been very young, and he does not say that he began to translate it immediately.

35. His possible knowledge of Hebrew is not obvious, but we have some interesting clues; for instance, in *Conf. ling.* §17.82, in order to explain the name Gershom of Moses' son, he reads in Exod. 2:22 γειώρ, instead of the normal LXX rendering προσήλυτος of MT גר (in Exod. 12:19, the LXX has γειώρας, too). In *Qaest. in Genesim* 3:10, commenting on Gen. 15:11, he gives the three possible meaning of וישב (from נשב, ישב, and שוב), which cannot be done in Greek.

in spite of recent attempts to affirm its factual accuracy,[36] but it displays other interesting features. Eleazar, the high priest of Jerusalem, has authority over all Israel, since he is able to send translators from all the twelve tribes. But strangely enough, King Ptolemy has sent him, together with the request for a translation, cultic items (a table and vessels) that follow the requirements of the Law, and demanded that they be used in the Temple service; and Eleazar has accepted, as if he were in need of such devices (§42.52–8). The paradox can be resolved if we view the *Letter* as a manifesto from Egyptian Jews who are both faithful to the connection of the Hebrew books with the land of Israel, and hoping for a better Temple worship in Jerusalem, even for Greek-speaking Jews living abroad.[37] If we omit the problem of accurate translations, this does not deviate much from the purpose of Ben Sira, with two major differences: first, there is no Samaritan allusion or threat, which suggests that it was written after the destruction of Gerizim; second, the other biblical books are not hinted at in any way, which suggests that their authority was still doubtful in some quarters. In fact, the poor state of the Ben Sira text, as well as the many discrepancies between the Hebrew, Greek, Syriac, and Latin ancient versions, indicate that it was reworked in many respects, suggesting that its authority was slim, or controversial.

But the salient point is that connecting Ben Sira and the publishing of Hebrew books with Alexandria paves the way for detecting possible Greek influences upon them.[38]

Plato, Moses and Alexandria

In order to discuss the ancient traditions about philosophers having borrowed from Moses,[39] we can single out two conclusions from the previous sections: first, some biblical clues to written laws outside the Moses corpus; second, the presence in Ptolemaic Alexandria of Hebrew scholars around the famous

36. Elias J. Bickerman, 'Zur Datierung des Pseudo-Aristeas', *Studies in Jewish and Christian History I*, Elias J. Bickerman (Leiden: Brill, 1976), 109–36, concludes from formal, secondary details that it was written in the second half of the second century; for the opposite view, see Nina L. Collins, *The Library in Alexandria and the Bible in Greek*, VTSup, 82 (Leiden: Brill, 2000), who strives, after others, to establish the general truth of the *Letter*, but does not discuss Bickerman's argument.
37. From another point of view, the *Letter* can be seen as legitimizing the Egyptian *diaspora* in spite of the curse of Deut. 28:68, see Paul McKechnie, 'Ptolemy Philadelphus: A New Moses', *Ptolemy II Philadelphus and his World*, Paul McKechnie & Philippe Guillaume (eds), Mnemosyne Suppl., 300 (Leiden: Brill), 233–46.
38. A detailed example is discussed by Katell Berthelot & Yaakov Kupitz, 'Deborah and the Delphic Pythia. A New Interpretation of Judges 4.4–5', *Images and Prophecy in the Ancient Eastern Mediterranean*, Martti Nissinen & Charles E. Carter (eds), FRLANT 233 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009), 95–124.
39. See Martin Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in Their Encounter in Palestine during the Early Hellenistic Period* (London: SCM Press, 1974; German orig. 1969), I:86–93.

library. To the former, we can add the testimony of the Elephantine Aramaic papyri. At the end of the fifth century BCE, the Judeans there had the same kind of relationship with Samaria and Jerusalem, for in 407 they wrote to Delayah and Shelemyah, sons of governor Sanballat of Samaria, to ask for help, after a similar request to Jerusalem had elicited no results. Their religious tenets can be summarized from two documents. The first is the so-called Passover papyrus[40] (Cowley #20), a letter written by one Hananyah (presumably from Jerusalem) to Yedonyah and his colleagues, in the fifth year of Darius II (419–418). He invokes the protection of the gods over them (אלהיא), then transmits some instructions of the king (the lines are lost), and eventually tells them to observe Passover and the Days of the Unleavened Bread, with a wording very close to Exodus 12:6-18 (but in Aramaic). This means that Yedonyah, the head of the garrison, did not have an established written law. According to another papyrus (Cowley #22), the same Yedonyah was in charge of an important religious collection, and shared its product between Yaho, Ashim-Bethel and Anat-Bethel, three gods. These two pieces do not show a pure monotheism, to say the least, though the names are definitely Yahwist. Moreover, among the many administrative and legal documents unearthed at Elephantine, the name of Moses never appears.

Now the book on the Hebrew laws written by the priest Aristobulus to King Ptolemy VI (181–146) is lost, but Clement of Alexandria gives an excerpt in a section dealing with the openness of Plato to learn from everywhere (*Strom*. 1.15.1–3): according to Aristobulus, Plato and maybe Pythagoras have followed 'our code of laws', but the name of Moses does not appear in his account; he mentions the expulsion of the Hebrews (not 'of the Jews') from Egypt, the arrival in the land, the fame of the people and its institutions.[41] Eusebius, who knew the book and its date (176 BCE, *Chronikon*),[42] adds that the main tenets of the Law 'had been interpreted (διηρμήνευται) by others before Demetrius of Phaleros, before the dominion of Alexander and the Persians', and draws a lengthy comparison between Plato's *Laws* and various biblical precepts (*Praep. evang.* 12.0; 13.12.1–2). The redundant words 'by others before Demetrius' seem to be a gloss of Eusebius, who knew the *Letter*. As for the verb 'interpreted', one can grant that it does not necessarily refer to a written translation.

Modern exegesis has ignored these ancient views. Most scholars still follow the classical theory of Graf-Wellhausen (nineteenth century) on the formation of

40. See Pierre Grelot, 'Le papyrus pascal d'Éléphantine: essai de restauration', *VT* 17 (1967), 201–7 and 481–2.

41. Photius, *Library* no. 244, quotes a lost section of Diodorus Siculus, which includes an excursus on the Jews, attributed to Hecateus of Abdera (or Miletus), who lived by the time of Alexander and the Diadochi. The passage follows the same outline, but adds that Moses founded Jerusalem and divided the Jewish people into twelve tribes. This cannot be genuine, and Josephus, who mentions a book *On the Jews* by the same Hecateus (probably spurious), does not know of this story. See Menahem Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, 3 vols (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1974–84), I: 44.

42. Or later, see Adela Yarbro Collins, 'Aristobulus', *The Old Testament Epigrapha*, James Charlesworth (ed.) (New York: Doubleday, 1985), II: 831–42.

the Pentateuch. Its main merit is its simplicity: pre-exilic sources (J, E, D) have been combined in Babylonia, where a thick priestly layer had been added (P), and the whole has been brought to Jerusalem by Ezra in the fifth century (after Ezra 7:11-26, in Aramaic); ancient historiography after Moses owes a lot to a Deuteronomist school. However, because of the complexity of the texts, many refinements have been introduced.[43] However, no consensus has emerged, in spite of many archaeological discoveries.[44]

The previous sections allow us to state that two major difficulties remain: first, the Judean or Jewish bias should be stressed again, because the Samaritans as Israelites of old are neglected; second, the thesis of major Hebrew editing activity in Babylonia is quite unlikely, even if we conjecture that Ezra had a commission similar to Hananyah's in the Elephantine documents. In keeping with the discussion of Ben Sira above, the simplest conclusion is to state that the final editing of the Pentateuch was done in Alexandria, perhaps in several schools. This obviously opens the door to Greek influence, and may reverse the ancient tradition on the relationship between Moses and Plato.

These results somehow converge with a recent trend in biblical scholarship that we can briefly survey. N. P. Lemche[45] thinks there was no conquest of Canaan in the Late Bronze period, and concludes that the Book of Joshua was written in the *diaspora*. He suggests that the literary model of the whole of Israelite history was Herodotus' *History*, written between 445 and 425 BCE. This view, already suggested by J. van Seters,[46] was adopted and refined by S. Mandell and D. Freedman,[47] then by J. Wesselius,[48] who sees Cyrus and Xerxes as the models of Joseph and Moses, respectively. P. Wajdenbaum[49] gives a minute account of the biblical similarities with Plato's *Laws* and fragments of Greek mythology, and concludes that the biblical authors have reworked them. R. Gmirkin, who focuses on Genesis 1–11 and the Exodus narrative, concludes that they depend on Berossus' *Babyloniaca* and Manetho's *Aegyptiaca* respec-

43. See the classical synthesis of Martin Noth, *Geschichte Israels* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1950), followed by others, see Richard E. Friedman, *Who Wrote the Bible?* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1987); Martin Noth & Hugh G. M. Williamson (eds), *The Future of Biblical Studies: The Hebrew Scriptures* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1987).
44. See Thomas Römer, 'La formation du Pentateuque selon l'exégèse historico-critique', *Introduction à l'Ancien Testament* (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 2004), 67–84.
45. Niels P. Lemche, 'The Old Testament – A Hellenistic Book?', *JSOT* 7 (1993), 163–93.
46. John Van Seters, *Abraham in History and Tradition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1975); *idem*, *In Search of History: Historiography in the Ancient World and the Origins of Biblical History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1983).
47. Sara Mandell & David Noel Freedman, *The Relationship between Herodotus'* History *and Primary History* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1993).
48. Jan-Wim Wesselius, *The Origin of the History of Israel. Herodotus's Histories as Blueprint for the First Book of the Bible*, JSOTSup, 345 (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002).
49. Philippe Wajdenbaum, *Argonauts of the Desert: Structural Analysis of the Hebrew Bible*, Copenhagen International Seminar (Sheffield: Equinox, 2011).

tively, both written around 280 BCE in Greek, and that the texts received their final shape at the library of Alexandria, in Hebrew as well as in Greek.[50]

Of course, these views have been challenged,[51] but we may add three further clues that, taken together, point to a final edition of the Hebrew Pentateuch at Alexandria, but before the other books.

The first one is the name of Moses (משה). It is currently assumed that its origin is the suffix *-mses*, which is used in compound names like *Ramses*, but this very name appears in Genesis 47:11 and elsewhere as רעמסס, and משה cannot be easily reduced to the component מסס. The name Moses is explained in Exodus 2:10: 'Because I drew [משיתיהו] him out of the water.' This is not very good, for משה would mean 'drawing', not 'drawn' (משוי). But the LXX has kept a form Μουσῆς, where the demotic *môu*, 'water', and *ousai*, 'draw, lift', can be recognized. The meaning is much better, all the more because the explanation is offered by an Egyptian woman. It should be noted that the name is conspicuously absent from the Zenon papyri (third century), which include documents signed by Jews or Israelites.

The second one is a rabbinic tradition (*b.Qid* 30a) stating that the middle – or the key – of the Torah according to the word count falls between דרש and דרש ('scrutinize', infinitive and perfect) in Leviticus 10:16. This cannot be fortuitous, so this is an editorial framing decision: the Torah as a whole has to be scrutinized intensely. This makes sense, for it purposely brings together very different pieces of literature, full of inconsistencies, and it is necessary to bridge over them – that is, to build *midrash*.

The third one can be called a 'calendar wrapping'. The very accurate Babylonian luni-solar calendar, kept by the Seleucids and the Jews, is based on named lunar months of *c.*29.5 days, hence a twelve-month year of 354 days, reckoned from the evening. To adjust it to the natural seasons, an additional month had to be inserted approximately every three years. It appears sometimes in the Bible, in later books, but most dates are given in unnamed, numbered months. However, the Essenes wanted a reform. The *Damascus Document* claims that the true biblical calendar has been lost, and cites, as an authority, a *Book of the Division of Times*[52] (*CD* 16:2–4). This work, also known as *Jubilees*, rewrites the stories of Genesis, with some omissions and changes, and various details from Exodus–Deuteronomy are added, as well as many dates. Its chrono-

50. Russell E. Gmirkin, *Berossus and Genesis, Manetho and Exodus. Hellenistic History and the Date of the Pentateuch*, JSOTSup, 433 (London: T&T Clark, 2006). Cf. review by Étienne Nodet, *RB* 114 (2007), 585–91.

51. See the discussions in Lester L. Grabbe (ed.), *Did Moses Speak Attic ?*, JSOTSup, 317 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001); the essays in Richard S. Hess *et al.* (eds), *Critical Issues in Early Israelite History* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2008), aim at proving the antiquity of Israel by invoking the archaeological discoveries, but nobody objects!

52. See Robert H. Charles, *The Book of Jubilees or the Little Genesis* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1902); James C. VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees: A Critical Text* (Leuven: Peeters, 1989).

logical frame, somewhat restored thanks to other sources, is a kind of solar year of 364 days (*Jub.* 6:33–8), reckoned from the morning, with numbered, unnamed months of thirty or thirty-one days; the year begins on a Wednesday with equinox and full moon. A. Jaubert has shown that this calendar lies in the biblical narratives,[53] and we may add that for the sacrifices, the days are reckoned from the morning, and that the Creation week, with the days beginning in the morning,[54] matches exactly what occurs in year I. But it is never explained how to adjust it in the following years, for the cycles of Sabbaths, moon and sun (seasons) are discrepant, and some Qumran documents show different ways of cumbersome adjustments.[55]

As for the Bible, the necessary conclusion is that this solar calendar never actually worked. We may point out that the biblical calendar month is called חדש, 'novelty', obviously referring to the new moon, so that using it for solar months is a distortion. Thus, the biblical solar calendar is just a literary device. Its likely *raison d'être* is to refer to Egypt, the only country in the Middle East that used a (very inaccurate) solar calendar until the enforcement of the Julian reform in 22 BCE, under Augustus.[56]

Final remarks

The identification of such an Egyptian Israelite, then Jewish, channel may shed some light on some Judean features of obscure origin. The synagogue as a place for study and worship is witnessed in Egypt from the third century BCE, but much later in Judea and in Mediterranean cities. The Sadducean party appears towards the end of the second century in Judea, promoting a return to the written laws against the mainstream Pharisees and their unscriptural traditions; so Scripture had then a new or renewed authority.[57] It was the Alexander Janneus revolution.[58] The Essenes, praised by Philo and faithful to Scripture, have developed a very Greek way of community life, with a sectarian view of separatedness from the people, forgetfulness of genealogy, sharing of goods and an insistence on celibacy.[59]

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53. Annie Jaubert, *La date de la Cène*, EB, 15 (Paris: Gabalda, 1957), 31–40.
54. See Étienne Nodet, 'Œuvre achevée le 6e jour, ou le 7e? (Gn 2,2)', *RB* 118 (2011), 116–22.
55. Jonathan Ben-Dov, 'The Initial Stages of Lunar Theory at Qumran', *JJS* 54, 2003, 125–38; *idem*, *Head of All Years: Astronomy and Calendars at Qumran in their Ancient Context*, STDJ, 78 (Leiden: Brill, 2008).
56. See Marshall Clagett, *Ancient Egyptian Science: A Source Book* (Darby, PA: Diane, 1989), 47.
57. Jonathan Klawans, 'Sadducees, Zadokites, and the Wisdom of Ben Sira', *Israël's God and Rebecca's Children. Christology and Community in Early Judaism and Christianity*, David B. Capes *et al.* (eds) (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2007), 261–76.
58. See Étienne Nodet, 'Sadducéens, sadocides, esséniens', *RB* 119 (2012), 186–212.
59. See Matthias Klinghardt, 'The Manual of Discipline in the Light of Statutes of Hellenistic Associations', *Methods of Investigation of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Khirbet Qumran*

But even if the final touches of the Hebrew Bible were made in Alexandria, it cannot be concluded that the biblical books, as a huge compilation of consistent historical monotheism, were written or edited in a short time. Besides Israelite archives, there were remote sources, probably from various locations. On the western side, we meet strange allusions to a Spartan connection: the high priest Jason (175–173), son of Onias, fled to Egypt, then 'to the Lacedemonians, hoping to find there shelter by reason of his kindred' (2 Macc. 5:9); the high priest Jonathan appended to his letter to the Spartans quoted above (§V) a previous letter of the Spartan King Areus to the high priest Onias, in which he affirms (1 Macc. 12:21): 'It has been found in a writing that the Spartans and the Jews are brothers, and that they are of Abraham's stock.' Again, 1 Maccabees 14:20-23 gives a letter of the Spartans to the high priest Simon. All this is generally thought to be spurious, but the specific use of 'Spartan' has to be explained. Unfortunately, almost nothing is known of Lycurgus, the Spartan lawgiver, but there could be some connection with a Spartan colony in Egypt, all the more since the Oniads have nothing to do with the high priests of the Persian period.[60]

On the eastern side, the shadow of the casuistic legislation of Hammurabi (eighteenth century) hovers over the Bible,[61] which suggests some ancient relationship between Greece and oriental cultures. Herodotus was prepared to admit, albeit in a mythological way, that the Phoenicians had taught the Greeks how to write (5.58.1); besides the alphabet as a tool, this should have conveyed some content that could have reached Plato. He says that the Phoenician rule extended to the Red Sea, thus including Canaan. He knew the Syria–Palestine of his time, but he never mentions anything Israelite. However, there may have been a local culture of old, for G. Amzallag draws attention to an ancient Canaanite technology that spread and developed into a major mythological feature in many nations: the invention, in the fourth millennium, of the secretive metallurgy of copper and brass southward of the Dead Sea (Feinan), which was quite sophisticated and unlikely to have been casually discovered in other places.[62] It can be tracked in various biblical details, and it is locally witnessed by a hoard of

Site: Present Realities and Future Prospects, Michael O. Wise *et al.* (eds), ANYAS, 722 (New York: The New York Academy of Sciences, 1994), 251–70; Per Bilde, 'The Essenes in Philo and Josephus', *Qumran between the Old and New Testaments*, Frederick H. Cryer and Thomas L. Thompson (eds), JSOTSup 290 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 32–68.

60. Josephus has filled up the gap by papponymy, cf. Nodet, *La crise maccabéenne*, 272–391.
61. For a recent assessment, see George A. Barton, *Archaeology and the Bible* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Library, 2009). In 2010, a cuneiform tablet paralleling Hammurabi's Code was discovered in the Middle Bronze layers at Hazor, in northern Israel.
62. Gerard N. Amzallag, *The Copper Revolution. Smelters from Canaan and the Beginning of Civilization* (Shani-Livna, IL: Hameara Publishing House, 2008); see *RB* 117 (2010), 439–51.

beautiful cultic objects of wrought brass unearthed in the N. Mishmar, close to the Dead Sea.[63]

As for the Greek Bible, a short note may be appropriate. In the prologue of the *Antiquities*, Josephus states that he wants to translate the Bible (in fact, he paraphrases). He is careful to invoke the precedent of the high priest Eleazar of the *Letter*, at least for the Pentateuch, and he introduces himself as commissioned for the task. Such an apology indicates that he was afraid to be perceived as breaking a taboo. Then he explains that he is the first to render into Greek the other books. He is obviously right, but in the narrow meaning of an official work deposited in public libraries, where it was both protected and available to scholars (Eusebius, *HE* 3.9). Of course, there were private translations circulated among Jews, even at Qumran, and used by early Christians, so the comment of Ben Sira's grandson stands.

This may explain why the Greek and Latin historians were utterly ignorant of Israelite history, even after the fall of Jerusalem. For instance, Tacitus (56–120 CE), who has made an inquiry, gives six traditions on the origins of the Jews (*Histories*, 5.2–13); only the fourth one can be viewed as a very short summary in one sentence of the biblical history, from Abraham to Solomon, but without a lawgiver; the last one is the longest, and obviously depends on the well-known story, in Greek, of Manetho, about the ancestors of the Jews being lepers expelled from Egypt with Moses. Incidentally, this shows that there was no copy of the LXX in the public libraries of Rome; the library of Alexandria had not been replaced.

63. See Sariel Shalev, *The Nahal Mishmar Hoard and Chalcolithic Metallurgy in Israel*, Eretz-Israel, 25 (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1996), 274–85.

3

Greek evidence for the Hebrew Bible

Russell E. Gmirkin

The Hebrew Bible purports to contain laws, report on historical events and, in large part, to have been written predating or contemporary to Archaic and Classical Greece. Yet literary, legal and cultural parallels between the Hebrew Bible and ancient Greece have been noted from Greco-Roman antiquity to the present. How does this Greek evidence bear on the date of the Hebrew Bible, if at all? Was the Hebrew Bible of greater antiquity and authority, exerting a decisive influence on Greek literature and philosophy, as was held by Jewish and Christian writers from ancient times until the mid-nineteenth century CE? Were the worlds of the biblical authors and the ancient Greeks contemporary and to some degree independent, with neither Greeks nor Jews having a direct acquaintance with the other's literature? Or is it possible, as is suggested by some today (including the present author), that Greek literature both pre-dated and directly influenced the Hebrew Bible? However these questions are answered, it is apparent that a discussion of cultural interactions between Jews and Greeks necessarily impinges on the relative chronology of Greek and biblical literature, and vice versa.

Four research models

From antiquity to the present, one can identify four distinct approaches to the study of the interactions of Greek and biblical literatures and culture, each with its own system of assumptions and inferences. Without dwelling on their relative merits, these can be described as follows.

Biblical temporal and cultural priority. The relationship between Greek and biblical literatures and cultures posed little controversy from Greco-Roman antiquity down to the 1800s or later. Aside from the Homeric epics, which were originally written for memorization and oral recital, Greek contributions to literature, philosophy and science post-dated their acquisition of the alphabet from the Phoenicians in the 700s BCE. Biblical literature, most famously the 'Books of Moses', claimed to have been authored by figures who lived centuries earlier. In the Hellenistic and Roman periods, it was taken for granted, by most

Jewish, Christian and 'pagan' authors, that Jewish literature pre-dated that of the Greeks, and any parallels were to be explained by Greek borrowings from the Jews.[1] Parallels proving Greek indebtedness to biblical literature were eagerly sought out and catalogued by both Jewish and Christian apologists in antiquity.[2] Research along identical lines found a resurgence among legal theorists, biblical scholars and classicists of the 1600s to the 1800s.[3] Higher criticism had little impact on the model of biblical priority, since nineteenth-century models dated the earliest Pentateuchal sources or supplements to the time of the biblical monarchy, or at the latest in the Persian period, preceding or contemporary to comparable Greek literary and legal texts.

Ancient Near Eastern temporal and cultural priority. The publication of the Hammurabi Law Code in 1902 inaugurated a new phase in comparative studies, in which biblical literature was considered heir to earlier ancient Near Eastern literature and cultural traditions. Under this model, ancient Near Eastern culture was viewed as having influenced the Greek and wider Mediterranean world, mainly in the Archaic Era or earlier, mediated by the Phoenicians and others, whose sea trade provided for cultural interactions.[4] Little evidence existed

1. Jewish and Christian claims for the priority of Moses and biblical literature are discussed in Arthur J. Droge, *Homer or Moses?: Early Christian Interpretations of the History of Culture*, Hermeneutische Untersuchungen zur Theologie, 26 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1989). Such claims were made by the Jewish writers Eupolemus, Aristobulus, Philo and Josephus; the Church Fathers Justin Martyr, Tatian, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Eusebius and Augustine; and 'pagan' authors such as Numenius of Apamea. Even the attacks on Moses by Celsus did not dispute his antiquity or his authorship of biblical writings; Celsus instead claimed that Moses borrowed his ideas from various wise figures of even earlier date; cf. Origen, *Against Celsus* 1.14–21.
2. See especially Eusebius, *Preparation for the Gospel* 12.35–47.
3. Hugo Grotius, *De Veritate Religionis Christianae* (Paris: Jean Le Maire, 1629); Theophilus Gale, *The Court of the Gentiles, or a Discourse Touching the Original of Human Literature*, 4 vols (London: Thomas Cockeril, 1669–77); John Spencer, *De Legibus Hebraeorum, Ritualibus et earum Rationibus libri tres* (Cambridge: Richard Chiswell, 1685); Archbishop John Potter, *Archaeologia Graeca, or the Antiquities of Greece* (2 vols; London: Abel Swall, 1697–8); Hugo Grotius & Jean Le Clerc, *The Truth of the Christian Religion in Six Books*: *Corrected, and Illustrated with Notes by Mr. Le Clerc* (London: James and John Knapton, 1709); Enoch Cobb Wines, *Commentaries on the Laws of the Ancient Hebrews: With an Introductory Essay on Civil Society and Government* (New York: G. P. Putnam, 1853); J. Benjamin Marsden, *The Influence of the Mosaic Code upon Subsequent Legislation* (London: Hamilton, Adams and Company, 1862).
4. Some influential studies on ancient Near Eastern influence on the Greeks and Greek literature include Cyrus Gordon, 'Homer and the Bible: The Origin and Character of East Mediterranean Literature', *HUCA* 26 (1955), 43–108; Michael C. Astour, *Hellenosemitica: An Ethnic and Cultural Study in West Semitic Impact on Mycenaean Greece* (Leiden: Brill, 1967); John Pairman Brown, *Israel and Hellas*, 3 vols, BZAW, 231, 276, 299 (Berlin: De Gruyter & Co., 1995, 2000, 2001); Walter Burkert, *The Orientalizing Revolution: Near Eastern Influence on Greek Culture in the Early Archaic Age*, Revealing Antiquity, 5 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992).

for Greek influence on either literature or culture of the Ancient Near East. The cultural independence of the Greek world and the Ancient Near East was emphasized during the biblical monarchic period, when the Iron Age kingdoms of Judah and Samaria were squarely within the ancient Near Eastern cultural sphere, almost completely isolated from Greek influences.[5] This relative cultural isolation was viewed as having extended into the Babylonian and Persian periods. Consequently, the Greeks were seen to have had little impact on the production of the Hebrew Bible, which was presumed to have been authored during the biblical monarchic, exilic and post-exilic periods.

Shared Eastern Mediterranean culture. Despite the apparent absence of direct or substantial contacts between the Greeks and the Jews of the Ancient Near East, comparative studies in Greek and biblical legal and literary traditions have nevertheless proceeded under a hypothesis of a shared Eastern Mediterranean culture, first championed by Raymond Westbrook in the late twentieth century.[6] This hypothesis viewed the Greek and ancient Near Eastern worlds as having had substantial shared cultural values mediated by sea trade among the Greeks, Phoenicians, Cretans and others.[7] A key category of primary evidence for the shared Eastern Mediterranean culture consisted of commonalities between biblical and Greek legal traditions, which were assumed to have been the result of cultural interactions during the biblical monarchic, Babylonian or Persian periods.

Greek temporal and cultural priority. Under this recently proposed model, shared features between biblical and Greek literature are explained by direct

5. One finds Greek pottery in the interior of the Levant from the fourteenth century BCE to the Hellenistic period, and Greek mercenaries stationed in the Negev are documented in the Arad ostraca of *c*.590 BCE; cf. Yohanan Aharoni & Joseph Naveh, *Arad Inscriptions* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1981); W.-D. Niemeier, 'Archaic Greeks in the Orient: Textual and Archaeological Evidence', *BASOR* 322 (2001), 11–31. However, isolated trade goods are not considered a reliable marker of significant cultural influence. Neither Greek merchants (who are unlikely to have penetrated into the interior) nor Greek mercenaries have been seriously argued as direct carriers of Greek literature or legal traditions into the east.
6. See the essays collected in volume 1 of Bruce Wells & Rachel Magdalene (eds), *Law From the Tigris to the Tiber: The Writings of Raymond Westbrook*, 2 vols (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009). Additional works building on Westbrook's model (but without sharing his premise of a Mediterranean-wide 'common law') include Anselm C. Hagedorn, *Between Moses and Plato: Individual and Society in Deuteronomy and Ancient Greek Law* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004); Gary N. Knoppers and Paul B. Harvey Jr., 'The Pentateuch in Ancient Mediterranean Context: The Publication of Local Lawcodes', *Pentateuch as Torah: New Models for Understanding Its Promulgation and Acceptance*, Gary N. Knoppers & Bernard M. Levinson (eds) (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2007), 105–41.
7. Cf. Raymond Westbrook, 'The Nature and Origin of the Twelve Tablets', *Law From the Tigris to the Tiber*, Wells & Magdalene, 46–9; Hagedorn, *Between Moses and Plato*, 45–8; Knoppers & Harvey, 'The Pentateuch in Ancient Mediterranean Context', 139–41.

Greek influences as a result of the conquests of Alexander the Great that brought the east under Greek rule and cultural values. This approach views substantial parts of the Hebrew Bible as having been authored in the Hellenistic Era, when Greek literary and legal traditions would be easily accounted for by direct contacts between Jews and Greeks. At the same time, ancient Near Eastern influences on the biblical text are accommodated as literary artefacts from earlier times, reflecting the rich cultural heritage of the Jewish and Samaritan peoples who authored the Hebrew Bible.

The comparison of Greek and biblical cultures and literatures will proceed differently, depending on the proposed answers to two fundamental questions: is there compelling evidence for cultural contacts or literary exchanges between the Greeks and the authors of the Hebrew Bible? And by what means did such cultural interactions take place? Different answers were provided by each of the four research models summarized above, resulting in strikingly different models of the relationship between the biblical authors and the ancient Greek world.

Under the theory of biblical temporal and cultural priority, research in parallels between biblical and Greek traditions and literatures was welcomed and taken as compelling evidence for Greek indebtedness to ancient Jewish literature and philosophy.[8] The difficulty was to explain how the Greeks became aware of biblical traditions. Proposed explanations included a hypothesized early translation of the books of Moses into Greek that was read by Homer, Pythagoras, Solon, Plato and other prominent Greek authors and thinkers (Aristobulus, the *Letter of Aristeas*),[9] or visits by figures like Thales, Solon and Plato to Egypt, where they acquired Jewish writings or encountered Jewish exiles (including Jeremiah!),[10] who informed them about Jewish ideas of divinity, philosophy and legal traditions (Justin Martyr, Eusebius, Augustine).[11]

Under the twentieth-century model of ancient Near Eastern temporal and cultural priority, the ancient authors of the Hebrew Bible lived in a geographical region culturally isolated from the Greeks. In the parlance of modern comparative studies, the biblical authors occupied a separate 'historical stream' from the Greeks of the Archaic and Classical Eras.[12] The lack of direct, significant cultural exchanges during the period when the biblical literature was envisioned as

8. Many of the alleged parallels between Jewish and Greek literature argued in the Greek and Roman periods were naïve or specious. Not so the survey of parallels between traditions found in Plato's *Republic* and *Laws*, and biblical legal traditions found at Eusebius, *Preparation for the Gospel* 12.35–47, which contains many valid points of comparison.
9. Aristobulus, *OTP* FF 3–4 (Eusebius, *Preparation for the Gospel* XIII.12.13–16; 13.4–5); *Letter of Aristeas* 30–31, 312–16.
10. Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine* 2.43; *idem*, *City of God* 8.11.
11. Justin Martyr, *Against the Greeks* 20, 25, 27 (cf. Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 1.96–8); Eusebius, *Preparation for the Gospel* 11.8; Augustine, *City of God* 11.
12. Meir Malul, *The Comparative Method in Ancient Near Eastern and Biblical Legal Studies* (Neukirchener: Verlag Butzon & Bercker Kevelaer, 1990); Shemaryahu Talmon, 'The "Comparative Method" in Biblical Interpretation – Principles and Problems', *Essential Papers on Israel and the Ancient Near East*, Frederick C. Greenspahn (ed.) (New York: New York University, 1991), 381–419.

having been produced meant that parallels between Greek and biblical traditions were of a typological rather than historical character, and thus were dismissed as insignificant. Under this model, comparative studies could be safely restricted to the ancient Near Eastern culture and literature.[13]

Under the model of a shared Eastern Mediterranean culture, parallels between biblical and Greek legal and literary traditions are considered sufficiently compelling to allow a hypothesis of some form of mediated cultural exchanges during the period when biblical literature was written. Since the Pentateuch (including its legal content) was conventionally dated to the late monarchic, Babylonian or Persian periods, this necessarily implied that significant cultural exchanges between the Greeks and the biblical world must have taken place during this same period.[14] The hypothesis of a shared Eastern Mediterranean culture effectively allowed for the biblical authors of the Ancient Near East to have coexisted within a Greek sphere of cultural influence. A grave difficulty is the lack of a credible mechanism for Greek literary or legal influences to have penetrated into the interior of the Levantine coast during this period, but the benefits of Greek comparative studies were thought to outweigh such historical considerations.[15]

Under the model of Greek temporal and cultural priority, authorship of biblical literature after the conquests of Alexander the Great remove the necessity of hypothesizing a shared Eastern Mediterranean culture in earlier times. During the Hellenistic Era, Greek influences penetrated the entirety of the former Ancient Near East, and the Jews had easy access to Greek legal and literary texts at the Great Library of Alexandria, where later traditions claimed Jewish scholars translated biblical writings into Greek (the LXX). Greek influences on the Hebrew Bible are easily accounted for, and mechanisms for the transmission of such influences are readily available. The main obstacle to the adoption of this model has been the resistance to the proposal that biblical literature could have been composed at such a late date.

13. Studies of the Covenant Code in light of ancient Near Eastern legal traditions provide a classic example of this approach. The possibility of Greek legal influences on the Covenant Code is not considered in John Van Seters, *A Law Book for the Diaspora: Revision in the Study of the Covenant Code* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); David P. Wright, *Inventing God's Law: How the Covenant Code Used and Revised the Laws of Hammurabi* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009). Several legal elements in the Covenant Code, such as homicide trials for animals, have no ancient Near Eastern parallel, but appear at Athens or elsewhere in the Greek world.
14. Influences no later than the Persian period were assumed at Raymond Westbrook, 'What is the Covenant Code?', *Law From the Tigris to the Tiber*, Wells & Magdalene, 28; Knoppers & Harvey, 'The Pentateuch in Ancient Mediterranean Context', 134, 139–41.
15. For the validity of the comparative approach despite the inability to specify mechanisms of transmission of legal traditions between Greeks and biblical writers, see Hagedorn, *Between Moses and Plato*, 278–9.

Greek evidence for the first biblical writings: the current debate

Theories that significant parts of the Hebrew Bible were written in Hellenistic times have been occasionally proposed, but seldom relied on Greek parallels.[16] A Hellenistic Era background for biblical writings, as a whole, was proposed by Niels Peter Lemche in a 1993 article titled 'The Old Testament – A Hellenistic Book?'[17] He suggested that Greek literary influences on biblical historiography were most easily accounted for under the hypothesis that the Hebrew Bible was authored in the Hellenistic Era, instead of earlier, as was almost universally assumed in contemporary biblical scholarship.

In 2001, a review of Lemche's theory appeared in a collection of papers from the *European Seminar on Historical Methodology*, published under the title, *Did Moses Speak Attic?*. Two of the papers in this seminar, authored by Rainer Albertz[18] and Lester L. Grabbe,[19] independently argued that a Hellenistic Era composition of the Pentateuch was excluded by a reference to Mosaic writings by Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.1–8, which previous scholars had almost universally identified as a fragment from the *Aegyptiaca* of Hecataeus of Abdera (*c*.315 BCE). Although Diodorus of Sicily wrote in *c*.60–30 BCE, he compiled his *Library* from many older sources. If the attribution of this particular passage to Hecataeus of Abdera was correct, as both Albertz and Grabbe assumed to be the case, then the books of Moses must have already been in existence in 315 BCE, and could scarcely be a Hellenistic Era composition, as Lemche had proposed.

16. Baruch Spinoza, *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* (Hamburg: Henri Kümraht, 1670) proposed that Chron., Ezra and Neh. were authored in the Maccabean Era or later. Bernhard Duhm dated substantial portions of Pss and Isa. to the Maccabean period in *Die Psalmen* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1899); *idem*, *Das Buch Jesaia* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1892). The suggestion that Gen. might have been an addition to the Pentateuch composed as late as the time of the Septuagint translation appeared at Giovanni Garbini, *History and Ideology in Ancient Israel* (New York: Crossroad, 1988), 135–6. A second-century BCE *terminus ad quem* for biblical manuscripts was argued in Thomas L. Thompson, *Early History of the Israelite People: From the Written and Archaeological Sources* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 207–8, 356 n. 10. The above authors dated biblical materials to the Hellenistic Era primarily on historical grounds, rather than on comparisons with Greek literature or culture. Biblical historiography was persuasively argued to reflect Greek influences in John Van Seters, *In Search of History: Historiography in the Ancient World and the Origins of Biblical History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1983), but in an anachronistically early time frame prior to the Greek literary parallels he discussed.
17. Niels Peter Lemche, 'The Old Testament – A Hellenistic Book?', *SJOT* 7 (1993): 163–93; reprinted in Lester L. Grabbe (ed.), *Did Moses Speak Attic?: Jewish Historiography and Scripture in the Hellenistic Period*, JSOTSup 317; European Seminar in Historical Methodology, 3 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 287–318.
18. Rainer Albertz, 'An End to the Confusion? Why the Old Testament Cannot be a Hellenistic Book!', *Did Moses Speak Attic?*, Grabbe, 30–46.
19. Lester L. Grabbe, 'Jewish Historiography and Scripture in the Hellenistic Period', *Did Moses Speak Attic?*, Grabbe, 129–55.

In my 2006 book, *Berossus and Genesis, Manetho and Exodus*, I devoted a chapter to the passage in question.[20] I argued there that the entirety of Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.1–8 was lifted from the account of Pompey's conquest of Jerusalem by Theophanes of Mytilene in 62 BCE. Although Theophanes, in turn, drew on Hecataeus of Abdera (along with various other sources), I argued that the reference to Mosaic writings came from first-hand knowledge acquired during his documented visit to Judea with Pompey in 63 BCE, and thus did not constitute evidence for the existence of Jewish writings in earlier times. In another chapter, I argued that the first evidence for Jewish biblical writings was the Septuagint translation of *c*.270 BCE,[21] and in the remainder of the book, I argued for the authorship of the Pentateuch in *c*.270 BCE, based on the use of several Hellenistic Era authors by the biblical authors.

In Lester Grabbe's 2007 review of *Berossus and Genesis*, he noted my challenge to the usual attribution of the passage in question to Hecataeus of Abdera.[22] In 2008, Grabbe published two responses that upheld the traditional identification of Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.1–8 as a fragment from Hecataeus of Abdera's writings against several recent challenges, including mine. The first of these responses was a brief discussion in Grabbe's *History of the Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple Period*.[23] A more extensive, definitive critique of opposing viewpoints appeared in an article titled 'Hecataeus of Abdera and the Jewish Law: the Question of Authenticity', for the Rainer Albertz Festschrift.[24]

The importance of the current debate over the authorship of the passage in question is reduced to this: if the traditional view of Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.1–8 as an authentic fragment taken from the *Aegyptiaca* of Hecataeus of Abdera survives scrutiny, then the Pentateuch must have been authored no later than *c*.315 BCE, and a Hellenistic Era date for biblical writings is effectively excluded. Conversely, if the attribution to Hecataeus of Abdera can be shown to be in error, and if the Septuagint translation of *c*.270 BCE constitutes the first genuine evidence for biblical writings, then one must seriously consider the

20. Russell E. Gmirkin, *Berossus and Genesis, Manetho and Exodus: Hellenistic Histories and the Date of the Pentateuch*, Library of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies, 433/ Copenhagen International Series, 15 (New York: T&T Clark, 2006), 34–71.
21. *Ibid*., 72–88.
22. 'Gmirkin also argues that the passage in Diodorus mentioning the law of Moses – normally assigned to Hecataeus of Abdera about 300 BCE – was actually written 250 years later by Theophanes – but Diodorus says it was from "Hecataeus"…'; Lester L. Grabbe, Review, *JSOT* 31 (2007), 117.
23. Lester L. Grabbe, *A History of the Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple Period*, 2 vols (New York: T&T Clark International, 2008), 1:114–19.
24. Lester L. Grabbe, 'Hecataeus and the Jewish Law: The Question of Authenticity', *Berührungspunkte: Studien zur Sozial und Religionsgeschichte Israels und seiner Umwelt; Festschrift für Rainer Albertz zu seinem 65* (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2008), 613–26. Grabbe repeated some of these arguments in *idem*, 'Hyparchs, *Oikonomoi* and Mafiosi: the Governance of Judah in the Ptolemaic period', *Judah between East and West: The Transition from Greek to Persian Rule (ca. 400–200 BCE)*, Lester L. Grabbe & Oded Lipschits (eds) (New York: T&T Clark, 2011), 75–7.

possibility that biblical writings could have utilized Greek sources written by Berossus, Manetho and others between *c*.315 and *c*.270 BCE. For this reason, I will undertake below to review and critique Grabbe's defence of the traditional theory of Hecataean authorship of the source used at Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.1–8.

Grabbe on Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3

Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.1–4 contains an account of events leading up to Pompey's conquest of Jerusalem and triumphant return to Rome that is thought to rely heavily on an account by Theophanes of Mytilene, Pompey's biographer, who accompanied Pompey on his eastern campaigns.[25] As the author was about to give an account of Jerusalem's fall, he interrupted the narrative to present the reader with important background information on the foundation and customs of Jews. This excursus, found at Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.1–8, contains a curious mixture of accurate information and glaring misinformation about the Jews, showing familiarity with Jewish writings, aniconography and other matters, but claiming that Moses founded Jerusalem and its temple, and also that the Jews never had a king. According to Photius, this passage from Diodorus claimed as its authority 'Hecataeus of Miletus', which the majority of scholars view as a mistake – possibly a copyist error – for Hecataeus of Abdera, whose *Aegyptiaca*, written in *c*.315 BCE, was a source well known to Diodorus, who used it extensively in Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 1.10–31, 43–98. Most scholars therefore viewed Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.1–8 as an additional excerpt from the *Aegyptiaca* of Hecataeus of Abdera. This theory was somewhat bolstered by the fact that Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 1.28.1–3 contained another account of the foundation of the Jewish nation, which is also thought to have been authored by Hecataeus of Abdera. However, many authors have noted problematic divergences between accounts of the foundation of the Jewish nation found in Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 1.28.1–3 and 40.3.1–8. While the former, like all other foundation stories of Egyptian colonies in Book 1, is uniformly positive, the story at Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.1–8 contains a troubling mixture of utopian and negative features; these are so inconsistent that scholars are unable to decide whether the account should be described as positive or negative, or both.[26]

Despite such problems, Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.1–8 was almost universally attributed, in nearly its entirety, to Hecataeus of Abdera, until two challenges were raised in the past decade. In 2003, Daniel R. Schwartz published an

25. See note 87 below.

26. See especially E. Gabba *et al.*, 'Minutes of the Colloquy', *Greek Knowledge of Jews up to Hecataeus of Abdera: Protocol of the Fortieth Colloquy, 7 December 1980* (Berkeley, CA: Center for Hermeneutical Studies in Hellenistic and Modern Culture, 1981), 33–45; cf. B. Bar-Kochva, *The Image of the Jews in Greek Literature* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2010), 129–35; Gmirkin, *Berossus and Genesis*, 47, 64.

article that challenged the old consensus in two key respects.[27] First, he claimed that Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.2–3, describing events that led up to Pompey's conquest of Jerusalem, drew in its entirety on the biography of Pompey by Theophanes of Mytilene, published in 62 BCE. Second, he claimed that the source Theophanes drew on for Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3 was not Hecataeus of Abdera, as was commonly supposed, but pseudo-Hecataeus, a Jewish writer of *c*.100 BCE who authored a work that falsely claimed to be authored by the real Hecataeus of Abdera. Independently of Schwartz, in 2006, I argued that Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.1–4 drew in its entirety on Theophanes' account of Pompey's wars in the East. Unlike Schwartz, I did not argue that Theophanes' sources in Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.1–8 included pseudo-Hecataeus. Instead, through a careful source analysis, I identified his sources as the authentic Hecataeus of Abdera (whom Theophanes mistakenly cited as 'Hecataeus of Miletus'), Manetho and Posidonius, supplemented by Theophanes' own first-hand observations of the Jews in Judea in 63 BCE.

As already noted, Grabbe wrote two responses in 2008 to theories that challenged the traditional interpretation of Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.1–8 as an authentic and historically valuable fragment of Hecataeus of Abdera. Grabbe addressed recent discussions of Hecataeus by D. W. Rooke, by Schwartz and by me. After a brief critique of Rooke's analysis,[28] Grabbe responded to nine arguments presented in either my book or Schwartz's article that called into question whether the passage can be assigned authorship by Hecataeus of Abdera. Grabbe then presented his own analysis of Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.1–8, which drew heavily on earlier research on the passage by Bezalel Bar-Kochva,[29] and which emphasized features that Grabbe considered to be supportive of Hecataean authorship.

A serious problem in Grabbe's article is that he conflated my opinions with those of Schwartz, without a clear explanation of either. As a result, the reader was forced to perform a careful source analysis on Grabbe's article itself, in order to determine which portions applied to Schwartz's thesis and which applied to mine. For instance, Grabbe clearly had only Schwartz in mind when

27. Daniel R. Schwartz, 'Diodorus Siculus 40.3 – Hecataeus or Pseudo-Hecataeus?', *Jews and Gentiles in the Holy Land in the Days of the Second Temple, the Mishnah and the Talmud*, Menachem Mor *et al.* (eds) (Jerusalem: Yad Ben-Zvi Press, 2003), 181–97.

28. D. W. Rooke, *Zadok's Heirs: The Role and Development of the High Priesthood in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 246–50. Rooke did not challenge the Hecataean authorship of the Diodoran fragment but, noting the strange combination of accurate and patently false details, questioned whether the passage could be utilized by historians as a dependable contemporary account of the Jews of the late fourth century BCE.

29. Bezalel Bar-Kochva, *Pseudo-Hecataeus On the Jews: Legitimizing the Jewish Diaspora* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1996), 7–43, 209–19; cf. Grabbe, 'Hecataeus and the Jewish Law', 619–20. Since I thoroughly engaged with Bar-Kochva's 1996 book in *Berossus and Genesis*, in this chapter I will cite his later, expanded treatment of Hecataeus of Abdera at Bezalel Bar-Kochva, *The Image of the Jews in Greek Literature*, 90–135.

he stated that the primary aim of his article was to 'look at these arguments discounting the passage in Diodorus 40.3 and ask whether we should abandon the old scholarly consensus and relegate the account to the realm of pseudo-Hecataeus'.[30] Grabbe later claimed that '[Gmirkin] takes over the principal arguments laid down by Schwartz but extends them'.[31] Yet I nowhere cited Schwartz's article, which I had not yet acquired when I wrote *Berossus and Genesis*, and my methods, analysis and conclusions radically differed from those of Schwartz. Grabbe's list of nine objections to the Hecataean authorship of Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.1–8 was presented to his readers as 'the main arguments presented by Schwartz and Gmirkin'. But three of these arguments against Hecataean authorship were raised by Schwartz alone, namely (using Grabbe's numbering):

5. There is no room for such a long passage on the Jews in Hecataeus's Egyptian history …
6. Photius, who preserved the passage, had doubts about it …
8. The passage shows evidence of having been written by a Jew …[32]

In fact, I entirely agree with Grabbe's rejection of these three specific points, and, more broadly, with Grabbe's rejection of Schwartz's proposal.[33] While Schwartz raised the possibility that the fragment from Theophanes drew on the forgery by pseudo-Hecataeus, I defended the older sources used by Theophanes as authentic, and included the *Aegyptiaca* by Hecataeus of Abdera among them. Since Grabbe nowhere presented a clear picture of my research, the reader may find useful a summary of my identification of sources within Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.1–8. That Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.1–8 is a composite account that drew on multiple sources is not only indicated by its diverse character and internal contradictions, but by the literary traces of quotation from sources, such as the phrase at 40.3.2, 'as some would say …'. The numerous indicators of composite character indicate the need for a careful source analysis, and pose a serious objection to any simplistic theory of unitary authorship, whether by Hecataeus of Abdera, pseudo-Hecataeus or (as is occasionally argued) Hecataeus of Miletus.[34]

30. Grabbe, 'Hecataeus and the Jewish Law', 613.
31. *Ibid*., 614.
32. *Ibid*., 618–19. Grabbe nowhere identified Schwartz as the source of these doubtful arguments, but left the reader with the impression that his criticism of them applied to my own work as well.
33. See also the detailed rebuttal of Schwartz's thesis at Bar-Kochva, *The Image of the Jews*, 106–8.
34. Most recently, Claudio Zamagni, 'La tradition sur Moïse d''Hécatée d'Abdère' d'après Diodore et Photius', *Interprétations de Moïse: Egypte, Judée, Grèce et Rome*, Philippe Borgeaud, Thomas Römer & Youri Volokhine (eds), Jerusalem Studies in Religion and Culture, 10 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 133–69. See Bar-Kochva, *The Image of the Jews*, 105 n. 42 for a detailed and convincing refutation of earlier proposals that Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3 drew on an authentic fragment of writings by Hecataeus of Miletus.

Sources in Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3

The surviving fragments of Theophanes excerpted in Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.1–4 contain a survey of events during 74–62 BCE, including: the background of the pirate war (40.1), which Pompey so capably put an end to in 67–63 BCE; Pompey's visit to Damascus in 63 BCE, when he heard arguments by Aristobulus II and Hyrkanus II (40.2); the excursus on Jewish origins and customs (40.3); an account of the Jewish War (promised at 40.3.1, but not surviving here); and Pompey's triumph at Rome in 62 BCE after his victories over the pirates, Mithridates, the Jews and others (40.4).

As background for the Jewish War, Theophanes included an excursus on the Jewish nation that contained elements of an ethnography. Greek ethnographies typically consisted of four sections: *origo* or origins (which in the case of colonies took the form of a *ktisis* or foundation story), *nomima*, history and geography.[35] Theophanes' excursus on the Jews did not contain a history section *per se*,[36] since the history of the Jews was fully treated in the framing narrative preserved at Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.2–4, which treated recent events in Judea, culminating in Pompey's conquest of Jerusalem. Theophanes also described the geography of Judea, and especially Jerusalem and its vicinity, in his account of Pompey's progress through the country, and his siege of Jerusalem and its temple.[37] The excursus was thus restricted to sections on the

35. G. Sterling, *Historiography and Self-Definition: Josephus, Luke-Acts and Apologetic Historiography* (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 20–54; cf. Bar-Kochva, *The Image of the Jews*, 96. Early ethnographies often included an additional section on *thaumasia* or wonders. The origins section would describe the autochthonous peoples that anciently inhabited the regions, if any. If the region had been colonized, the origins section would include the *ktisis* or foundation story, a distinct genre very popular in antiquity (cf. Plato, *Hippias Maior* 285d). Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.2 explicitly stated that Judea was desolate and uninhabited prior to the arrival of the colonists under Moses. For Judea, the *origo* simply consisted of the *ktisis*, as directly indicated at 40.3.1; cf. Bar-Kochva, *The Image of the Jews*, 115.

36. The excursus is, however, well integrated with the surrounding historical material. Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3 emphasizes that rulership under a king was not part of the ancestral Mosaic constitution of the Jews (40.3.5; cf. 40.2), but arose due to a corruption of Jewish practices under Persian and Greek rule (40.3.8; cf. the recent innovation of kingship and tyranny by Alexander Jannaeus and his sons, necessitating Pompey's intervention, at Strabo, *Geography* 16.2.36–37, 40).

37. Josephus, *Ant*. 13.54, 57; Strabo, *Geography* 16.2.40. For Strabo's reliance on Theophanes of Mytilene (by way of Posidonius) in *Geography*, 16.2.34–40, see Gmirkin, *Berossus and Genesis*, 68–71. This section in Strabo's *Geography* gives a good sense of the ethnographical content of the Jews in Theophanes, including a foundation story, customs, history (emphasizing the late origin of Jewish rulership by a king, a prominent theme in Theophanes) and geography. This renders moot Bar-Kochva's puzzlement about why the ethnographic excursus omitted sections on geography and history (*The Image of the Jews*, 104): both were present in Theophanes' account. Another perplexing feature of the excursus noted by Bar-Kochva (*ibid*., 99, n. 25), namely its placement just before

origins and later customs of the Jews, which Theophanes presented as a prelude to his account of Pompey's conquests of 63 BCE.

> Now that we intend to record the wars against the Jews, we consider it appropriate to give first an outline of the foundation [κτίσιν] from its beginning, and of the customs [νόμιμα] practiced among them.[38]

Not surprisingly, Theophanes used different sources for the *ktisis* and *nomima* sections of his excursus on the Jews. The first section, on the foundation of the Jews in ancient times, combined Manetho's negative tradition on the expulsion of the Jews and other foreigners from Egypt with the utopian story about the Mosaic foundation of the Jewish nation and constitution by Hecataeus of Abdera.[39] The second section, which dealt with the customs (*nomima*) practiced among the Jews down to present times, combined a brief passage from Posidonius on the reasons for Jewish hostility towards strangers with Theophanes' longer first-hand account of Jewish customs based on his observations in Judea in 63 BCE.[40] I identify the passages attributable to these four distinct sources as follows.

Hecataeus of Abdera

According to my analysis, Theophanes of Mytilene drew on the *Aegyptiaca* of Hecataeus of Abdera for almost half of Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.1–8. Indeed, a major object of my chapter was to recover the original Hecataean material in the passage in question. I reconstructed the authentically Hecataean content as follows:

Theophanes' account of Pompey's war, rather than at some earlier episode in Jewish history found in Diodorus, also finds a ready explanation.

38. Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.1.
39. Oddly, Bar-Kochva did not include the Mosaic foundation story of the Jewish nation as part of his *origo* or *ktisis* section, which he restricted to the negative account of the expulsion from Egypt at Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.1–2 (*The Image of the Jews*, 115–16). This, despite Moses being explicitly described as having founded Jerusalem and other cities at 40.3.3!
40. Bar-Kochva included the entirety of Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.3–8, within his *nomima* section, commenting that 'the internal sequence of the *nomima* section more or less accords with what is customary in foundation stories' (*The Image of the Jews*, 104). Bar-Kochva's subsuming of the Jewish foundation story under his *nomima* section rather than under the *ktisis* section cannot possibly be correct. In general, Bar-Kochva fails to appreciate the distinction Greeks drew between revered ancient constitutions and subsequent laws (cf. Aristotle, *Nicomachian Ethics* 1181b 5–10; *idem*, *Politics* 1247b). Greek foundation stories often included a description of the constitution (*politeia*) established by the founder on establishing a colony. The constitution that Moses established for the Jewish nation was described by this very term at 40.3.3. Bar-Kochva's confusion between the Greek categories of constitution and laws (explicit at *The Image of the Jews*, 124) evidently led him to place the Mosaic foundation story in his *nomima* section.

> (3.2b) And the most outstanding and active among them banded together and [journeyed to] Greece and certain other regions; their leaders were notable men, chief among them being Danaus. (3.2c) But the greater number [settled in] what is now called Judea, which is not far distant from Egypt and was at that time utterly desolate. (3.3a) The colony [αποκίας] was headed by a man named Moses, outstanding both for his wisdom and courage. On taking possession of the land, he founded [έκτισε], besides other cities, one that is now the most renowned of all, called Jerusalem. In addition he established the temple that they hold in chief veneration, instituted their forms of worship and ritual, drew up the laws relating to their political institutions [πολιτείαν] and ordered them. (3.3b) He also divided the people into twelve tribes, since this is regarded as the most perfect number and corresponds to the number of months that make up a year. (3.4c) He picked out the men of most refinement and with the greatest ability to head the entire nation, and appointed them priests; and he ordained that they should occupy themselves with the temple and the honors and sacrifices offered to their God. (3.5a) These same men he appointed to be judges in all major disputes, and entrusted to them the guardianship of the laws and customs. (3.6b) Their lawgiver was careful also to make provision for warfare, and required the young men to cultivate manliness, steadfastness, and, generally, the endurance of every hardship. (3.7) He led out military expeditions against the neighboring tribes, and after annexing much land apportioned it out, assigning equal allotments to private citizens and greater ones to the priests in order that they, by virtue of receiving more ample revenues, might be undistracted and apply themselves continually to the worship of God. The common people were forbidden to sell their individual plots, lest there be some who for their own advantage should buy them up, and by oppressing the poorer classes bring on a scarcity of manpower. (3.8a) He required those that dwelt in the land to rear their children, and since their offspring could be cared for at little cost, the Jews were from the start a populous nation. (3.8d) Such is the account of Hecataeus of Miletus [*sic*] in regard to the Jews.

This material is stylistically consistent, forming a single literary unit in which a formulaic Hellenistic foundation story (or *ktisis*) was presented with Moses as the colony's leader. A foundation story would typically contain: the story of the emigration of the original settlers from their native land to the site of the colony; their conquest of the land and foundation of a new city, under the military leadership of the founder; the establishment of a temple for the colonists; the division of the population into tribes; and the founder's ordering of society, including its laws and political constitution. The identifiable Hecataean material in Book 40 is consistent with the account in Book 1: in both, a simple foundation story appears in which the Jews are treated favourably, even idealistically, and Moses appears as an able and vigorous leader, much like Danaus, Belus and other founders of Egyptian colonies in Book 1. The story in Book 40 idealizes the Jewish colony established by Moses, consistent with the utopian tendency of Hecataeus' writings both on the Egyptians and on the

Hyperboreans.[41] A specific link to Hecataeus is the description of Judea as a 'colony' (*apoikias*).[42] Egyptian outposts were identically described at Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 1.28–9.[43] Literally meaning 'a settlement far from home', this was the usual term for a Greek colony sent out by a mother city.[44]

Unfortunately, Grabbe nowhere noted my arguments for the existence of an authentic Hecataean foundation story (in contrast to Schwartz). In his analysis of Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.1–8, the majority of elements that Grabbe pointed out as appropriate to a Greek foundation story by Hecataeus of Abdera are taken from fragments of 40.3 that I have also identified as Hecataean and that correspond to my own analysis. Grabbe's arguments in favour of Hecataean authorship, although appropriate to a critique of Schwartz's theory, actually reinforce my breakdown of the passage's sources.[45]

Manetho

In contrast to the stereotypical foundation story of Jewish origins from the pen of Hecataeus of Abdera, other details in Theophanes' account present a dark picture of the initial populating of Judea, not by an expedition of Egyptian colonists, but a crowd of unwanted foreigners expelled from Egypt due to offensive religious practices:

> (3.1b) When in ancient times a pestilence arose in Egypt, the ordinary people ascribed their troubles to the working of a divine power; for indeed with many strangers of all sorts dwelling in their midst and practicing different habits of rites and sacrifices, their own traditional observances in honor of the gods had fallen into disuse. (3.2a) Hence the natives in the land surmised that unless they removed the foreigners, their troubles would never be resolved. At once, therefore, the aliens were driven from the country.

This version of the origin of the Jews is inconsistent with the Hecataean tradition, but instead ultimately derived from Manetho, who was the first author in Greek to describe an expulsion of foreigners – the Hyksos – from Egypt into Judea. Common motifs in the above passage and Manetho are: a plague sent

41. Hecataeus' work *On the Hyperboreans* was discussed at J. Bolton, *Aristeas of Proconnesus* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), 24, 73; Oswyn Murray, 'Hecataeus of Abdera and Pharaonic Kingship', *JEA* 56 (1970), 148; J. Dillery, 'Hecataeus of Abdera: Hyperboreans, Egypt, and the *Interpretatio Graeca*', *Historia* 47 (1998), 255–75.
42. 'Now the Egyptians say that also after these events a great number of colonies were spread from Egypt all over the inhabited world.' Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 1.28.1.
43. Cf. Bar-Kochva, *Pseudo-Hecataeus*, 208–9.
44. *Ibid*., 30–31.
45. Bar-Kochva presented similar arguments for Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.1–8 as a typical Greek foundation story (*The Image of the Jews*, 119–25), mostly drawing on passages I identified as taken from Hecataeus of Abdera.

from God on Egypt;[46] foreigners with objectionable religious practices living in Egypt;[47] and the expulsion of foreigners from Egypt.[48] Against my identification of Manetho as the source of this hostile, manifestly Egyptian account of Jewish origins,[49] Grabbe approvingly cited Berthelot's 2008 article that rejected any affinity of the passage in Diodorus with Manetho's account.[50] Berthelot's argument rested entirely on the absence of any allusion to the Jewish colonists as having included leprous Egyptians,[51] a feature which Grabbe and Berthelot apparently considered essential to Manetho's story of Jewish origins. But here, Grabbe and Berthelot both failed to read Manetho with sufficient care. Manetho reported two traditions about expulsions of unwanted populations from Egypt to Judea. In the first account, Manetho told how Egypt had suffered under the rule of the Hyksos, a dynasty of foreign kings dedicated to the cult of Seth-Typhon, the Asiatic god of confusion.[52] The aliens were finally expelled and settled in what would later become Judea, founding Jerusalem and its temple.[53] It is evident that this foundation story, in which Judea was settled by foreigners driven from Egypt, was the source of the Manethoan tradition on which Theophanes drew. Manetho also told a second tale in which certain Egyptian lepers, under the leadership of a priest of Seth-Typhon named Osarseph, called the Hyksos back into Egypt, oppressed the land and performed outrageous acts against the Egyptian gods. They were finally driven out, with their Hyksos allies, into the Hyksos homeland of Judea.[54] But this was not a foundation story of Jerusalem

46. In Manetho, a 'blast from God' (Josephus, *Against Apion* 1.75); at Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.1, 'pestilence … ascribed … to the working of a divine power'.
47. Josephus, *Against Apion* 1.75–6; the Hyksos later returned to Egypt from Jerusalem, renewed their offensive practices (1.248–9) and were expelled again.
48. *Ibid*., 1.85–9.
49. Grabbe, 'Hecataeus and the Jewish Law', 620, conceded the majority viewpoint that Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.1–2 reflected the hostile Egyptian view of the Jews as foreigners; cf. Bar-Kochva, *The Image of the Jews*, 113, 116, who noted the negative tradition in Manetho. Bar-Kochva's use of Manetho as evidence for an Egyptian tradition of Judea founded by impious foreigners expelled from Egypt known to Hecataeus of Abdera in *c*.315 BCE effectively involves an anachronism, since Manetho's *Aegyptiaca* was written in *c*.285 BCE. Indeed, the negative traditions about Jewish origins in Manetho appear to have been written to correct the idealized account authored by Hecataeus of Abdera; cf. Gmirkin, *Berossus and Genesis*, 185–6.
50. Katell Berthelot, 'Hecataeus of Abdera and Jewish "Misanthropy" ', *Bulletin du Centre de recherche français à Jérusalem* 19 (2008) http://bcrfj.revues.org/5968.
51. *Ibid*, ¶4.
52. Josephus, *Against Apion* 1.75–91, 228, discussed at Gmirkin, *Berossus and Genesis*, 170–91.
53. Josephus, *Against Apion* 1.90 ('There … they built a city in the country now called Judaea, capable of accommodating their vast company, and gave it the name of Jerusalem'), 228 ('[the earlier Hyksos] occupied what is now called Judea, founded Jerusalem, and built the temple').
54. *Ibid*., 1.228–50, discussed at Gmirkin, *Berossus and Genesis*, 192–214. The cyclic return and ejection of Seth and his wicked followers into Asia is a common motif found

or the Jewish nation, as even Josephus realized,[55] but a much later episode, probably reflective of the Ramesside Era historical revival of the cult of Seth in the eastern nomes, where Sethos I and the Ramesside kings placed their capital.[56] One can easily agree that the foundation story in Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.1–8 makes no mention of later Egyptian lepers. However, this does not show literary independence from Manetho, as Grabbe and Berthelot assert, but instead accords with a proper understanding of the true founders of Judea as the earlier Hyksos in Manetho's first account.

Posidonius

The first century BCE description of the Jews as a nation of misanthropes by Apollonius of Molon is softened and excused in another of Theophanes' sources that I have identified as Posidonius, whose writings appear to have been known to both Theophanes and Pompey.[57] I identify as Posidonian the following passage in Diodorus:

> (3.4b) The sacrifices that he established differ from those of other nations, as does their way of living, for as a result of their own expulsion from Egypt he introduced a life which is somewhat unsocial [απάνθρωπόν] and hostile to strangers [μισόχενον].

As Berthelot's delightful analysis shows, the Greek image of the misanthrope, the hater of humankind, arose as a figure, in Classical Era Greek comedy, who stereotypically shunned human contact as a result of some deeply disappointing wrong by someone he thought was a friend. Following earlier scholarship, Berthelot assumed that Hecataeus of Abdera was the source quoted in Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.1–8, and, consequently, that he must have been the first Greek writer to label the Jews as misanthropic.[58] Berthelot was at a loss to explain what motivated Hecataeus of Abdera to label the Jewish nation as misanthropic and hostile to strangers. Berthelot speculated that Jewish dietary restric-

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in Egyptian literature and mythology. Both the Hyksos and the Egyptian followers of Osarseph in Manetho worship Seth-Typhon; cf. *ibid*, 200–201, 281–2.

55. Manetho placed the foundation of Jerusalem and its temple after the first expulsion of the Hyksos and (explicitly) prior to the Egyptian revolt under Osarseph according to Josephus, *Against Apion* 1.90, 228, 232. The Hyksos who later returned to Egypt as allies of Osarseph were described at 1.248 as Solymites – that is, Jerusalemites. The notion that Osarseph founded Jerusalem and the nation of the Jews thus runs counter to both Manetho's first and second stories about Hyksos expelled from Egypt into Judea.
56. See the extensive discussion at Gmirkin, *Berossus and Genesis*, 196–201. Some of Manetho's contemporaries slanderously equated Osarseph, the priest of Seth-Typhon, with Moses (Josephus, *Against Apion* 1.250), but Manetho himself did not appear to subscribe to this theory. See Gmirkin, *Berossus and Genesis*, 207–8.
57. *Ibid*., 294–5.
58. Berthelot, 'Hecataeus of Abdera', ¶1 with notes 4–5.

tions and other religious obligations led to the Jews excluding themselves from social and political life in Alexandria, which in turn led Hecataeus of Abdera to characterize the Jewish nation as misanthropic. But Hecataeus nowhere mentioned Jewish dietary restrictions, either in Book 1 or in the allegedly Hecataean passage under discussion in Book 40, and Berthelot noted that several testimonies in fact showed Jewish participation in the *polis* of Alexandria, undermining her theory.[59] The hypothesis of authorship by Hecataeus of Abdera thus leads to unresolved difficulties in understanding the accusations of *apanthropy* and *misoxenia* against the Jews in Book 40.

Such problems evaporate under the recognition that Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.4 reflected later, first century BCE slanders by Apollonius Molon. According to Josephus, Apollonius Molon dedicated a whole book on the subject of the Jews, and attempted to demonstrate their collective misanthropy, atheism and inhospitality as a nation.[60] Additionally, it is widely agreed that the highly anti-Semitic tradition found in Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 34/35.1.1–5 stems from Apollonius Molon, either directly or (more likely) indirectly, by way of Posidonius.[61] Accusations of Jewish *misanthropy* and *misoxenia* appear together in Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 34/35.1.1–5, which states that the Jews, alone among all nations, looked on all mankind as their enemy, consistent with what Josephus related about Molon's writings. Berthelot noted that the term *misoxenia* appears only twice in Greek literature: at Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 34/35.1.4 and 40.3.4.[62] As Berthelot noted, the Jews were the only nation accused of *misanthropy* in all of Greek literature.[63] Outside of Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.4, the first preserved accusation of Jewish *misanthropy* appeared in Apollonius Molon's writings.[64] While accusations of *misanthropy* and *misoxenia* against the nation of the Jews by Hecataeus of Abdera are entirely hypothetical and without evidence, aside from the disputed Hecataean authorship of 40.3.4, the application of such terms to the Jews by Apollonius Molon is fully documented in fragments of his writings. We may thus confidently attribute the origin of such national slanders to Apollonius Molon after *c*.88 BCE. In Diodorus

59. *Ibid*., ¶12, note 34.

60. Josephus, *Against Apion* 2.89–96, 148. Fragments from Apollonius Molon are collected and discussed in M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, 3 vols (Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1970) (henceforth *GLAJJ*) §§46–50; cf. Bar-Kochva, *The Image of the Jews*, 469–516.

61. See discussion at *ibid*., 440–57. Apollonius Molon's slanderous story of Jewish annual sacrifice of a Greek (Josephus, *Against Apion* 2.89, 91–6) also illustrated the sentiment of xenophobia.

62. Berthelot, 'Hecataeus of Abdera', ¶11.

63. *Ibid*, ¶13.

64. Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 34/35.1.3; Josephus, *Against Apion* 2.148; cf. *GLAJJ* §§49–50, 63; Gmirkin, *Berossus and Genesis*, 53, 285, 290–95. One cannot positively exclude the possibility that charges of *misanthropy* were levelled against the Jews during the earlier persecutions under Antiochus IV Epiphanes (cf. *ibid*., 285–90) and recorded by his historians, but such writings have not survived, and, in any case, long post-date Hecataeus of Abdera.

Siculus, *Library* 40.3.4, the accusations against the Jews were softened (from *misanthropy* to *apanthropy*) and excused, suggesting that this passage was not taken directly from the hate-monger Apollonius Molon, but from the moderate Posidonius, who was a contemporary and opponent of Apollonius Molon at Rhodes.[65]

Theophanes of Mytilene

The final source I identified in Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.1–8 was Theophanes of Mytilene himself, whose discussion of the Jews included not only passages drawn from Hecataeus of Abdera, Manetho and Posidonius, but also first-hand impressions garnered during his close contact with the Jews in 63 BCE. Unlike the idealized Greek foundation story from Hecataeus, whose only accurate detail was that Moses was the Jewish lawgiver, the details from Theophanes contain considerable reliable information about the Jews of his day, including a direct reference to Pentateuchal writings.

> (3.4a) But he had no images whatsoever of the Gods made for them, being of the opinion that God is not in human form; rather the heaven that encompasses the Earth is alone divine, and rules everything. (3.5b) … For this reason [the entrusting of laws to priests in Hecataeus of Abdera] the Jews never have a king, and the leadership of the multitude is regularly vested in whatever priest is regarded as superior to his colleagues in wisdom and virtue. (3.5c) They call this man high priest and believe that he acts as a messenger to them of God's commandments. (3.6a) It is he, they say, who in their assemblies and gatherings announces what is ordained, and the Jews are so docile in such matters that straightway they fall to the ground and do reverence to the high priest when he expounds the commandments to them. There is even appended to the laws, at the end, the statement: 'These are the words that Moses heard from God and declares to the Jews.' (3.8a) … As to marriage and the burial of the dead, he saw to it that their customs [νομίμα] should differ widely from those of other men. (3.8b) But later, when they became subject to foreign rule, as a result of their mingling with men of other nations (both under Persian rule and under that of the Macedonians who overthrew the Persians), many of their traditional practices [πατρίων νομίμων] were disturbed.

In contrast to the foundation story taken from Hecataeus of Abdera, the above material described Jewish customs (*nomima*) of a later date down to its author's

65. *Ibid*., 293–4. At *ibid*., 294, I noted similar explanations for the social causes for the Sicilian slave revolt due to social distress by Posidonius and for the rise of piracy in Asia Minor by Pompey, likely under influence from Posidonius.

present.[66] Several details specifically point to the time of Theophanes and Pompey:

- It was Pompey who first discovered that the Jewish temple contained no images:[67] Greek accounts from earlier times held that the temple contained an ass's head or a statue of Moses seated upon an ass.[68]
- The statement that the Jews had never had a king, but were traditionally ruled by priests, was a specific feature of Pompey's propaganda to justify his rejection of the royal claims of the two warring sons of Alexander Jannaeus, and is found in passages from several ancient authors who relied on Theophanes' account of the fall of Jerusalem.[69]
- The statement that the Jewish ancestral customs had been disturbed as a result of rule under the Persians and Greeks brought the reader down to the author's present, at the overthrow of Greek rule and the dawn of the Roman era in Judea, and served to introduce Theophanes' next topic: the account of the Jewish War and Jerusalem's fall.[70]
- The eyewitness description of Jewish gatherings, at which the high priest presided and expounded Mosaic writings, are consistent with having been written by a visitor to Jerusalem such as Theophanes, who spent considerable time in the presence of the high priest.[71]

66. The earlier foundation story narrative set in 'ancient times' (Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.1) consistently described events and the Mosaic establishing of Jewish institutions in the past tense. The description of *nomima* by Theophanes, by contrast, frequently utilized the present tense to describe practices among the Jews in his day.
67. Tacitus, *Histories* 5.9. See Gmirkin, *Berossus and Genesis*, 51–2 on the Roman references to Jewish aniconography starting after 63 BCE, mainly among Pompey's circle of friends.
68. Josephus, *Against Apion* 2.114; Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 34/35.1.3.
69. Strabo, *Geography* 16.2.40; Josephus, *Ant*. 14.41; Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.2; cf. Gmirkin, *Berossus and Genesis*, 54–5, 261–3.
70. Since the disturbance of traditional practices (*patrion nomimon*) under the Persians and Macedonians at Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.8b referred to events long after the time of Hecataeus of Abdera, and indeed appears to post-date the Hellenistic Era, it is assigned to Diodorus by many scholars, including Bar-Kochva at *The Image of the Jews*, 102 and n. 31. But the main thrust of 40.3.8b is the overthrow of hierocracy or priestly rule by the establishment of a tyranny under kingship by Aristobulus II and Hyrkanus II, as also explicitly at 40.2 and implicitly at 40.3.5. The common theme in these three passages (acknowledged at Bar-Kochva, *The Image of the Jews*, 99, 104) is best taken as indicating common authorship (namely Theophanes). Yet Bar-Kochva attributed 40.3.5 to Hecataeus, but both 40.2 and 40.3.8b to Diodorus, since the latter two passages both demand a date no earlier than the start of Roman rule in Judea in 63 BCE. Bar-Kochva's analysis is similar to that found in Doron Mendels, 'Hecataeus of Abdera and a Jewish "patrios politeia" of the Persian Period (Diodorus Siculus XL, 3)', *ZAW* 95 (1983), 96–111, where it was improbably suggested that Jewish opposition to rule by kings independently surfaced in Jewish circles in both Hecataeus' time (*c*.315 BCE) and in the Hasmonean period (*c*.63 BCE).
71. Josephus, *Ant*. 14.50, 60, 73.

Grabbe's critique

With this summary of my source analysis of Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.1–8 as background, Grabbe's critique of what he saw as my main arguments may be reviewed, using his numeration as follows.

'1. Diodorus Siculus's account of the Jews in 40.3 does not match the undoubted borrowing from Hecataeus in various passages in book 1.'[72]

After quoting Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 1.28.1–4, Grabbe stated, 'It is difficult to see how this "seriously contradicts" the account in 40.3, as Gmirkin alleges.'[73] Later, Grabbe commented about these foundation stories about Egyptian colonies, 'It would hardly be surprising if these accounts included one on Jerusalem.'[74] Grabbe seriously misunderstood my argument, since my source analysis reconstructs the Hecataean foundation story of the Egyptian colony established at Jerusalem under the leadership of Moses – quoted in full in §4.1 above – and extensively argued the consistence of this foundation story used by Theophanes with the same passages Grabbe quoted from Book 1. Hecataean material from both Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 1.28.1–4 and reconstructed from 40.3 are idealized and reflect stereotyped Hellenistic foundation stories in which a wise, courageous founder figure (*oikist* or *ktistes*) led an expedition of colonists, conquered new territory, established a city and temple, and framed the colony's constitution and laws.

What this idealized positive foundation story in both Book 1 and 40.3 'seriously contradicts' is the hostile content that derived from Manetho and Apollonius Molon (by way of Posidonius), in which the Jews were not Egyptians, but foreigners, and were not sent forth to establish a colony, but expelled from Egypt's borders in order to end certain plagues caused by the foreigners' impiety and misanthropy. In the typical Egyptian 'expulsion' story, the problematic impious religious rites of the foreigners were already in force in Egypt, and were the cause of them being driven from the country,[75] while in the 'colony' story at Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3, Moses only established Jewish religious rites after founding the city of Jerusalem and its temple, in accordance with Hellenistic stereotypes.[76] Such internal contradictions are strongly indicative of multiple sources.

72. Grabbe, 'Hecataeus and the Jewish Law', 615.
73. *Ibid*., 615.
74. *Ibid*., 616.
75. Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.1–2; cf. the worship of Seth-Typhon by the Hyksos at Josephus, *Against Apion* 1.78, 237.
76. The term 'colony' (*apoikia*) appears only in the positive Moses story at Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.3; *contra* Grabbe, 'Hecataeus and the Jewish Law', 616, the passages in Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.1–2 that have the negative 'expulsion' motif do not use the Greek term for 'colony'. Nor is the settlement of the foreigners expelled into Judea described as a colony in either account in Manetho's *Aegyptiaca* (as quoted in Josephus).

And, indeed, Grabbe, along with Berthelot, Bar-Kochva, Jacoby and many others, fully subscribes to a theory of two sources, one describing the Jews as a colony of Egyptians who settled in Syria, and the other describing the Jews as foreigners expelled from Egypt, due to their offensive religious practices. The main point of difference is that Grabbe *et al.* assert that both positive and negative traditions about the origin of the Jews were recorded by the same writer, Hecataeus of Abdera. According to this model, the positive Egyptian version of Jewish origins that survives only at Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 1.28.2–3 was rejected by Hecataeus, who refuted it by means of a second, negative Egyptian version of Jewish origins that allegedly survives only at Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3. As proof that Hecataeus did not accept all Egyptian stories about colonizing the world, Grabbe and Bar-Kochva both appeal to Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 1.29.5–6:

> In general, the Egyptians say that their ancestors sent forth numerous colonies to many parts of the inhabited world… but since they offer no precise proof whatsoever for these statements, and since no historian worthy of credence testifies in their support, we have not thought that their accounts merit recording.

According to Grabbe, 'Here Hecataeus actually dismisses the statement quoted earlier in 1.28 by the declaration that there is no proof.'[77] Bar-Kochva makes similar assertions. Bar-Kochva theorized that the second story on the origins of the Jews originally stood directly after Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 1.29.5–6, and was intended to demonstrate that the Egyptians did not, in fact, establish a colony in Judea.[78]

But Grabbe and Bar-Kochva's interpretation of Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 1.29.5–6 as implying – or even allowing – a rejection of the Egyptian colonization of Judea is clearly in error. For, had Hecataeus of Abdera rejected this Egyptian tradition, this would imply that (a) the Egyptians 'offer(ed) no precise evidence whatsoever' for their claim to have colonized Judea; (b) that 'no historian worthy of credence testifies in their support'; and (c) that Hecataeus had 'not thought their account worthy of recording'. Taking these three points in order, it cannot be said that the Egyptians 'offer(ed) no precise evidence [*akribous*] whatsoever' for the Jews as an Egyptian colony. To the contrary, such proof appears in the authentic Hecataean material twice. The first is at Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 1.28.2–3, which both Grabbe and Bar-Kochva quoted in full, but without grasping its significance:

> They say also that… the nation of the Colchi in Pontus and that of the Jews, which lies between Arabia and Syria, were founded as colonies by certain emigrants from their country; and *this is the reason why* it is a long-established

77. Grabbe, 'Hecataeus and the Jewish Law', 615.
78. Bar-Kochva, *The Image of the Jews*, 112–13, 129.

> institution among these two peoples to circumcise their male children, *the custom having been brought over from Egypt*. [italics added]

The custom of circumcision is here noted as supporting evidence for the Egyptian claims to have colonized Colchis and Judea.[79] This is reiterated by Hecataeus in another passage, found in the Colchian foundation story at Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 1.55.4–5:

> And it was at this time [during the conquests of Sesostris], they say, that some of the Egyptians, having been left behind near the Lake Maeotis, founded the nation of the Colchi. And the *proof that they offer of the Egyptian origin of this nation* is the fact that the Colchi practice circumcision even as the Egyptians do, *the custom continuing among the colonists sent out from Egypt as it also did in the case of the Jews.* [italics added]

The requisite proof for the Egyptian colonization of both the Colchian and Jewish nations could hardly be more explicit. Since Hecataeus of Abdera credited this proffered proof for the Egyptian colonization of Colchis under Sesostris,[80] and since the same proof was offered for the Egyptian colonization of the Jews, there appears to be no basis for the claims of Grabbe and Bar-Kochva that Hecataeus rejected the latter tradition.

Second, it cannot be said of Egyptian claims to have colonized the Jewish nation that 'no historian worthy of credence testifies in their support'. At Herodotus, *Histories* 2.104, the 'father of history' said that the Egyptians founded the nations of both Colchians and the 'Syrians of Palestine':

> For it is plain to see that the Colchians are Egyptians … The Egyptians said that they hold the Colchians to be part of Sesostris' army … The Colchians and Egyptians and Ethiopians are the only nations that have from the first practiced circumcision. The Phoenicians and the Syrians of Palestine acknowledge of themselves that they learnt the custom from the Egyptians.

79. The same structure is found in all the stories of Egyptian colonies found in Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 1.28–9. First, Hecataeus briefly related the Egyptian foundation story, including the name of the founder, the location of the colony, and features of the constitution or form of government the founder established. Second, Hecataeus listed customs brought over from Egypt or other proofs that gave credibility to the Egyptian foundation story. This included the exemption of the Chaldeans from taxation and their observation of the stars, in common with Egyptian priests and astrologers (1.28.1); the Egyptian custom of circumcision practised among the Colchians and Jews (1.28.2–3); and a whole series of Egyptian features of ancient Athens (1.28.4–7; 29.1–5, which Hecataeus mainly presented as accurate, despite some sniping reservations (1.29.5).
80. Bar-Kochva, *The Image of the Jews*, 112–13.

The stories about Sesostris recorded by Hecataeus of Abdera in Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 1.53–8 systematically drew on Herodotus, *Histories* 2.102–10.[81] Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 1.28.2–3 and 55.5, both quoted above, directly depended on *Histories* 2.104.[82] The main change that Hecataeus introduced was to identify 'the Syrians of Palestine' in Herodotus more closely as 'the nation… of the Jews, which lies between Arabia and Syria' (Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 1.28.2). It is thus apparent both that Hecataeus highly regarded the historian Herodotus, and that the latter directly testified in support of Egyptian claims to have colonized both the Colchian and Jewish nations, as demonstrated by their practice of the circumcision learned from the Egyptians.

Third, it cannot be said of the Egyptians that Hecataeus had 'not thought their account worthy of recording', since Hecataeus did, in fact, record the Egyptian colonization of the Jews in the undisputedly authentic story at Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 1.28.1–4, and, according to Grabbe *et al.*, in Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3 as well! If Hecataeus had rejected the Egyptian account, by his own statement he would not have recorded it at all, much less recorded it twice. It is especially difficult to accept Bar-Kochva's statement that the foundation story at Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3 was intended to refute Egyptian claims of having established the Jews as a colony,[83] when 40.3.3 expressly called Moses the leader of a colony (*apoikias*).

In summary, the idea that Hecataeus rejected the Egyptian story of having founded the nation of the Jews does not stand scrutiny: the custom of circumcision was expressly offered as proof, Herodotus lent support to these accounts, and Hecataeus did, in fact, find this story worthy of recording. It is evident, then, that Hecataeus of Abdera accepted the Jewish nation as having been established as a colonizing expedition sent out from Egypt. This underscores the fact that the contradictory, negative tradition in Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.1–2, in which the Jews were impious foreigners expelled from Egypt, represents an entirely different tradition from the idealized foundation story found in Hecataeus of Abdera.

'2. The passage in Diodorus 40.3 is better ascribed to the writer Theophanes who wrote about Pompey's conquests in the east.'[84]

Grabbe argued that my assignment of the surrounding text of Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.1–2 on Pompey's activities in the East to Theophanes, although a 'reasonable hypothesis', amounts to guesswork, since 'Gmirkin simply assumes this hypothesis rather than trying to prove it'.[85] In actuality, I provided extensive arguments,[86] as well as citing the abundant secondary literature that universally

81. Sterling, *Historiography and Self-Definition*, 66–9.
82. *Ibid*., 66; Bar-Kochva, *The Image of the Jews*, 113; Berthelot, 'Hecataeus of Abdera', ¶6 and note 16.
83. Bar-Kochva, *The Image of the Jews*, 113.
84. Grabbe, 'Hecataeus and the Jewish Law', 617.
85. *Ibid.*, 617.
86. Gmirkin, *Berossus and Genesis*, 40–44.

regards Theophanes as the likely historical source on all extant traditions on Pompey's eastern campaigns.[87] Grabbe argued that Theophanes was unlikely to have asserted that 'the Jews never have a king' (Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.5), in light of the civil war of 65–63 BCE between '*two Jewish kings*' who petitioned Pompey at Damascus to decide between their rival claims to the throne. Grabbe overlooked the fact that a third delegation of 200 leading citizens present at Damascus – likely members of the *gerousia* (the assembly of elders) who had governed Judea under Salome Alexandra in 76–65 BCE[88] – presented arguments to Pompey that the monarchy was contrary to the ancestral laws of the Jewish nation, and that the Jews were ruled by a high priest instead.[89] Indeed, the citizens claimed that the kings had overthrown the ancestral laws, and enslaved and tyrannized the Jewish polity. It was seemingly on the very basis of this argument that Pompey abolished the office of king and returned Jewish rule to that of a high priest (Hyrkanus) and *gerousia*, as earlier under Salome Alexandra.[90] If, according to the seeming eyewitness report of Theophanes at Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.2, the delegation representing the nation could argue that the Jews were traditionally ruled by a high priest instead of a king, one can hardly take exception to Theophanes having reported this same Jewish 'ancestral law' in the foundation story that immediately followed at 40.3.[91]

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87. *Ibid*., 41–4, 259–60. For Theophanes as a source on Pompey's eastern campaigns, including Judea, see conveniently *GLAJJ*, 1.186 (Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.2), 267 (Strabo, *Geography* 16.2.40), 327 (Livy and Josephus). Schwartz, 'Diodorus Siculus 40.3', 188–90 persuasively argued that Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.2–3 were of common authorship and drew on a 'Pompeian historian such as Theophanes of Mytilene'. Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.4 concluded with Pompey's triumph at Rome in 62 BCE, which is also thought to have ended Theophanes' biography of Pompey. See discussion and literature at Gmirkin, *Berossus and Genesis*, 43, 260.
88. *Ibid*., 261–3. The delegation claimed that their legitimate leadership of the Jews had been recognized by the Romans since the Jewish revolt against Demetrias in 161 BCE (Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.2). The authority of the *gerousia* had effectively been abolished under the kingship of Aristobulus II in 65 BCE.
89. Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.2; Josephus, *Ant*. 14.41.
90. As I discussed in *Berossus and Genesis*, 259–63, a consistent theme in passages deriving from Theophanes of Mytilene was the claim that the Jews were never ruled by a king (Strabo, *Geography* 16.2.40; Josephus, *Ant*. 14.41; Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.2; 40.3.5), but that kingship was a recent innovation by Alexander Jannaeus and his two warring sons. This account of Jewish history served as political propaganda to bolster Pompey's abolition of the monarchy as a laudable restoration of Jewish ancestral traditions.
91. Schwartz noted considerable verbal overlap between Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.2 and 40.3, including the assertion that the Jews never had a king, that pointed to common authorship ('Diodorus Siculus 40.3', 188–9). The *gerousia*'s claim that the two kings had 'overthrown the ancient laws' at 40.2 suggested that their arguments before Pompey included historical elements; this connects directly with the subject matter in the excursus on the Mosaic foundation of the Jewish polity under hierocratic rule, at 40.3. Even Bar-Kochva connected the statement that 'the Jews never had a king' with the historical claims of the Jewish embassy at 40.2 (*The Image of the Jews*, 99, 103).

Grabbe also asserted that Diodorus Siculus plainly labelled his source as 'Hecataeus' in *Library* 40.3, and that 'it would be rather unlikely for a reference to Theophanes in the original text to have been replaced by "Hecataeus of Miletus" in the process of textual transmission'.[92] But neither Schwartz nor I claimed that the text of 40.3 originally read Theophanes or that the text's citation of 'Hecataeus of Miletus' arose as a result of an error by a later copyist such as Diodorus or Photius, as commonly proposed. Instead, I argued that the mistaken reference to 'Hecataeus of Miletus [*sic*]' stood in the original text of Theophanes, who may not have been aware that the foundation story he quoted was from the less famous writer, Hecataeus of Abdera.[93]

'3. These passages [Diodorus Siculus, *Library* Books 1 and 40] show a difference of literary style.'[94]

Grabbe commented, 'This is a very subjective point', citing my book, pages 36 and 45. Grabbe misunderstood my argument. Although I noted a 'marked difference' between Books 1 and 40 at the pages cited, I nowhere claimed that this was a difference in literary style; rather, it was between the favourable report of the Egyptian colonization of the land of Judea in authentic Hecataean passages (in both Books 1 and 40) and the hostile report of foreigners expelled into Judea from Manetho and Apollonius Molon (Book 40 only).

'4. No Greek writer until the first century CE refers to the account of Hecataeus as quoted in Diodorus 40.3.'[95]

Grabbe considered this to be attributable to the 'small amount of Greek literature preserved from antiquity', and to the general disinterest in the Jews by Greek writers. Yet Theophrastus, the successor of Aristotle, was keenly interested in barbarian customs and frequently utilized the *Aegyptiaca* of Hecataeus of Abdera when he wrote his work, *On Stones*. The ignorance about the Jews that Theophrastus displayed in *On Stones* (315/314 BCE) and the misinformation

92. Grabbe, 'Hecataeus and the Jewish Law', 617. Grabbe places too much weight on Photius' identification of 'Hecataeus of Miletus (sic!)' as the source used by Diodorus Siculus in *Library* 40.3. Photius made a similar mistake when he claimed that the advisors of Antiochus VII Sidetes constituted Diodorus' source on the slanders against the Jews that Diodorus wrote about in *Library* 34/35, which Diodorus actually lifted (without credit) from the histories of Posidonius of Apamea (see note 61 above). Indeed, these two quotes taken from Diodorus appear in direct sequence in Photius. In neither instance does the identification of the ancient source claimed by Photius carry force.
93. Cf. Bar-Kochva, *The Image of the Jews*, 106. At Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 1.37.3; 1.46.8; 2.27.1, Diodorus listed his source as 'Hecataeus' without listing his city of origin. At Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 10.24.4, Diodorus accurately cited 'Hecataeus of Miletus'. The confusion of Hecataeus of Abdera with the famous author Hecataeus of Miletus would have been more natural for Theophanes, since Miletus and Mytilene were located relatively nearby, on the coast of Asia Minor; cf. Gmirkin, *Berossus and Genesis*, 61–2.
94. Grabbe, 'Hecataeus and the Jewish Law', 618.
95. *Ibid*., 618.

about the Jews in *On Piety* (319–310 BCE) is thus highly noteworthy, and constitutes a powerful argument that the detailed information in Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.1–8 was not found in Hecataeus of Abdera's *Aegyptiaca*.[96] The *Aegyptiaca* of Manetho (*c*.285 BCE), which appears to have been written in part to correct the *Aegyptiaca* of Hecataeus of Abdera, also displays almost no knowledge of the Jews. Another telling example is the Jewish author Aristobulus (*c*.150 BCE), who scoured the literature of the Great Library of Alexandria for evidence that the Greeks knew Jewish writings prior to the Septuagint translation, and who knew the *Aegyptiaca* of Hecataeus of Abdera, yet made no mention of Pentateuchal writings known to Hecataeus (cf. Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3.6). Bar-Kochva and others noted the importance and influence of the *Aegyptiaca* both to other Greek writers and to the Jews.[97] Further, the lack of any reference to Jewish aniconography in Greek or Roman sources prior to Pompey's inspection of the temple in 63 BCE – and the explosion of such references afterwards – appears significant.[98] All this is consistent with Diodorus Siculus *Library* 40.3 having drawn on Theophanes' biography of Pompey in 62 BCE, but is extremely discordant with Hecataean authorship and a date of *c*.315 BCE.

'7. The context of Diodorus 40.3 is 40.1–2, 4, relating to the time of Pompey, which would make the passage an excerpt from a Pompeian historian.'[99]

Grabbe conceded that the surrounding context derived from an account of Pompey's campaigns, such as the one authored by Theophanes of Mytilene, but argued that it was possible that Diodorus could have drawn on a different source for the excursus on Jewish origins and customs at 40.3.

Diodorus Siculus was notorious as a lazy compiler of traditions, often relying on a single ancient source for one or several books, frequently without citing the author.[100] The proposal that Diodorus relied on a single Pompeian historian – Theophanes – throughout *Library* 40.1–4 is thus entirely reasonable.[101] Given

96. Gmirkin, *Berossus and Genesis*, 66–7 and literature cited there on the literary and chronological relationship between Theophrastus, Hecataeus of Abdera and Theophanes of Mytilene.
97. See especially Sterling, *Historiography and Self-Definition*, 59–91. Jewish knowledge of the *Aegyptiaca* of Hecataeus of Abdera is evidenced by pseudo-Hecataeus, a Jewish forgery of the late second century BCE.
98. Grabbe asserts that 'some non-Jews were aware that the Jews of this period [the time of Hecataeus of Abdera] were aniconic' ('Hecataeus and the Jewish Law', 622 and note 29). However, all the Greek and Roman sources of Jewish aniconography he cited post-date 63 BCE.
99. Grabbe, 'Hecataeus and the Jewish Law', 619.
100. See Gmirkin, *Berossus and Genesis*, 40–41 and literature cited there; cf. Bar-Kochva, *The Image of the Jews*, 106–7 n. 48.
101. So Schwartz, 'Diodorus Siculus 40.3', 188–90, who argued that Diodorus drew on Theophanes of Mytilene throughout extended portions of Book 40. Bar-Kochva, *The Image of the Jews*, 106–7 n. 48, agreed with Schwartz in principle that 'Diodorus

the extensive verbal and thematic links between 40.2 and 40.3 discussed earlier, the case for common authorship is very strong.

'9. Since the exodus story is taken from the Septuagint, the account of the exodus in Diodorus is later than the translation (*c*.250 BCE), since no Greek translations preceded the Septuagint.'[102]

According to Grabbe's paraphrase: 'Gmirkin strangely argues that no one could refer to the Exodus from Egypt without having read it in a Greek translation of Exodus, and no such translation preceded the LXX.' While Grabbe agreed that the Septuagint was the earliest translation of the Pentateuch, he suggested that Hecataeus drew on a Jewish oral source he encountered in Egypt, a possibility he claimed that I failed to consider.[103]

In actuality, I discussed both theories thoroughly. After rejecting the idea of a Greek translation preceding the Septuagint that some have suggested, I then turned to the more common proposal of Hecataeus having heard the biblical Exodus story from Egyptian Jews, against which I raised two substantial objections.[104] First, I pointed out that while Hecataeus of Abdera frequently claimed to possess Egyptian sources for the traditions he related in the *Aegyptiaca*, he nowhere claimed to have consulted a Jewish source.[105] Second, I pointed out that the excursus on the Jews at Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3 did not reflect the perspective or concerns of *diaspora* Judaism, but was instead exclusively focused on Jerusalem, and is remarkably well-informed on matters in Jerusalem, such as Jewish festival gatherings presided over by the high priest.[106] This detailed knowledge about contemporary Jewish conduct is best explained as

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normally followed the same source for a long segment for his history'. But Bar-Kochva correctly observed that Schwartz's suggested identification of Theophanes as the source used in 40.2–3 was his theory that Theophanes quoted pseudo-Hecataeus in the excursus, 'since Theophanes could have drawn from Hecataeus'.

102. Grabbe, 'Hecataeus and the Jewish Law', 619.

103. Grabbe suggested that Hecataeus could have learned about the biblical Exodus tradition from 'oral sources and hearsay', perhaps 'from contact with some Jews directly' such as 'Egyptian Jews, possibly of priestly descent' (*ibid*., 619, 624). Similar theories are propounded at Bar-Kochva, *The Image of the Jews*, 115–19, on 'Egyptian and Jewish sources of information' for the excursus on the Jews; see *ibid*., 119–23 for an imaginative reconstruction of how Hecataeus of Abdera might have constructed the existing, largely inaccurate account at Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3 out of biblical traditions from a Jewish–Egyptian source.

104. 'Knowledge of the Jewish Exodus tradition by a Greek historian several decades before the Septuagint would pose serious difficulties … These difficulties are usually overcome by postulating that Hecataeus learned about the Pentateuch from Jewish priests living in Alexandria…' (Gmirkin, *Berossus and Genesis*, 38–9). The latter is exactly the position taken by Grabbe, along with Bar-Kochva and many others.

105. *Ibid*., 39, 56. Egyptians are named as sources on Egyptian colonies established around the world at Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 1.28.1–29.5; 55.4–5. They appear as sources on other topics at 1.21.2; 26.1; 43.6; 69.7; 86.2; 96.2.

106. Gmirkin, *Berossus and Genesis*, 56.

derived from first-hand observations by Theophanes of Mytilene, who spent time in the company of Pompey and the high priest Hyrkanus II in 63 BCE. Documented contacts between Theophanes and leading Jews in Judea make it unnecessary to resort to conjectural contacts between Hecataeus of Abdera and Egyptian Jews.[107]

Grabbe also suggested that the Exodus story had become an important part of Jewish heritage by the Hellenistic period, evidenced by the so-called 'Passover papyrus' of 419 BCE from Elephantine.[108] But the 'Passover papyrus' makes no mention of the Exodus tradition – nor, indeed, of Passover.[109] While there is no question that a Passover festival was celebrated at Elephantine, since two ostraca mention it, it goes beyond the evidence to assert that the festival was associated with an Exodus tradition at this early date. As is well known, the Elephantine Papyri provide no evidence to support the existence of any biblical text known either to the Egyptian Jews, or to the Judean and Samarian Jews with whom they corresponded in *c*.410 BCE.[110] Grabbe's inferences from the Elephantine data thus appear unjustified.

To summarize the above analysis, Grabbe conflates the arguments made by Daniel Schwartz – most of which I reject – with those that I presented in *Berossus and Genesis*. His analysis makes several mistakes in describing my case for the authorship of Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3 by Theophanes of Mytilene, and also relies on faulty analysis of Manetho (with Berthelot; argument 1), Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 1.28.1–4; 29.5–6 (with Berthelot and Bar-Kochva; argument 1) and the Elephantine Papyri (argument 9). Grabbe's objections to my source analysis and dating of Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 40.3 thus do not bear up under close scrutiny. It follows that the passage in Diodorus is removed as a purported witness to Pentateuchal writings by Hecataeus of Abdera in *c*.315 BCE. The first external evidence for the Pentateuch, or indeed for any biblical writings, is the Septuagint translation of *c*.270 BCE.

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107. One is reminded of theories in antiquity about contacts between Jews residing in Egypt and Greek lawgivers and philosophers, such as Solon, Plato and others, whose ideas were thought to have been influenced by biblical traditions. See above, notes 9–11.
108. 'The exodus had apparently become an important part of the Jewish story of their past by the Hellenistic period. The Passover was being celebrated in Egypt before 400 BCE, as shown by the "Passover papyrus" among the Elephantine papyri.' Grabbe, 'Hecataeus and the Jewish Law', 619.
109. Porten restored 'Passover' in a lacuna in lines 4–5, based on biblical parallels, but surviving portions of the text mention only the Days of Unleavened Bread. It is not certain, based on the evidence from Elephantine, whether Egyptian celebrations of Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread had been combined into a single festival, as in some (but not all) biblical texts. See the detailed discussion at Reinhard G. Kratz, 'Temple and Torah: Reflections on the Legal Status of the Pentateuch between Elephantine and Qumran', *Pentateuch as Torah*, Knoppers & Levinson, 82–9.
110. Cf. Gmirkin, *Berossus and Genesis*, 28–33.

Implications explored

The establishing of a *terminus ad quem* of *c*.270 BCE for the earliest biblical writings has profound implications for evaluating the relationship between the Greeks and the biblical authors. The most important implication is methodological. Failure to include relevant data due to *a priori* assumptions about chronology undermines the integrity of the research process. Since the first external evidence for biblical texts appears well into the Hellenistic Era, it is no longer legitimate to assume an earlier date for the composition of biblical literature as a starting point for the study of literary or cultural influences on the biblical text. Instead, comparative studies should fully embrace Greek as well as ancient Near Eastern texts, social institutions and laws. Furthermore, it no longer appears either necessary or desirable to postulate a broad, diffuse shared Eastern Mediterranean culture in the pre-Hellenistic period as a mechanism for the communication of Greek laws or other cultural features to the Jewish world. It is, instead, permissible to contemplate direct Greek cultural influences on the Jewish world during a period when Greeks exercised rule in the east. The best approach for biblical comparative studies is to consider the broadest range of comparative data permitted by external data. This means including not only ancient Near Eastern texts and institutions, but also Greek comparative materials from Archaic to early Hellenistic times.

Past assumptions regarding the antiquity of the biblical text have handicapped comparative research by limiting comparative literary and inscriptional materials to the pre-Hellenistic period. An inclusive approach opens up a wealth of new materials for both literary and cultural comparisons. It now becomes entirely legitimate to contemplate direct influences on the biblical text from the entire body of Greek literature accessible to the Jews as late as *c*.270 BCE, including Archaic Era texts such as Homer and Hesiod, prose and poetic writings from Classical Greece – especially Athens – and later works from the Hellenistic east. The legitimacy of considering such a vast corpus of Greek texts is highlighted by the Great Library of Alexandria, which aimed to include the whole of Greek literature; it was a library not only close by during a period when Judea was under Ptolemaic rule, but which the later tradition preserved in the *Letter of Aristeas*, associated with the Septuagint translation of the Pentateuch, by Jewish scholars invited to Alexandria for that purpose. This opens up new opportunities to explore literary influences on the biblical texts, including raising the possibility of direct Greek literary influences on the biblical law collections.

New possibilities for biblical research are also created in the area of biblical comparative studies, especially relative to the Pentateuchal law collections. There is no question that Jews and Greeks were in the same historical stream, after the conquests of Alexander and the beginnings of the Hellenization of the east. Direct Greek influences on Jewish culture may thus be accepted without reservation during this period, and should be considered in comparative studies. But Greek influence on Jewish culture mediated by Greek writings may have been equally profound, and must also be fully considered. Greek philosophers, among others, wrote extensively about constitutions and laws found throughout the Mediterranean world in the Archaic and Classical Eras. It is thus conceivable

that Hellenistic Era Jews were exposed to Greek legal traditions from earlier times, especially the Athenian legal system. Archaic and Classical Era Athens could have had an impact on the formulation of biblical laws in the Hellenistic Era by way of Greek legal writings. Although direct contact between Athens and Jerusalem cannot be contemplated in the pre-Hellenistic Era, the exploration of possible parallels between Athenian and biblical social organization, laws, and culture now appears fully warranted, in light of potential Jewish access to Athenian literature found in the Great Library of Alexandria.

The most important implication of establishing of a new *terminus ad quem* of *c*.270 BCE for biblical writings is thus the broadening of intellectual horizons, embracing a theoretical possibility of Greek influences on the biblical text not contemplated as late as twenty years ago. Concrete studies exploring the new possibilities have begun to appear in the past few years. One important area has been the examination of possible Greek literary influences on the biblical text, especially texts from the crucial period *c*.315–270 BCE, which past scholarship had mistakenly excluded as impossibly late. Likely examples of biblical literary dependence on Greek sources include the following:

Homer, *Odyssey*	*c*.750 BCE	Genesis 42–6[111]
Homer, *Iliad*	*c*.750 BCE	1–2 Samuel[112]
Plato, *Laws*	*c*.350 BCE	Genesis–Deuteronomy[113]
Manetho, *Aegyptiaca*	*c*.285 BCE	Exodus 1–15[114]
Berossus, *Babyloniaca*	278 BCE	Genesis 1–11[115]
Berossus, *Babyloniaca*	278 BCE	2 Kings, Jeremiah[116]
Ariston	278–276 BCE	Genesis 10[117]
Cleitarchus	after 278 BCE	Exodus 1–15[118]

111. The story of the revelation of Joseph's identity to his family in Gen. 42–6 contains a cluster of shared motifs with the return of Odysseus in *Odyssey* books 14 to 24, as discussed in Philippe Wajdenbaum, *Argonauts of the Desert: Structural Analysis of the Hebrew Bible* (Sheffield: Equinox, 2011), 138–41.
112. Affinities between the story of David and Goliath and passages from the *Iliad* have long been noted. Other Homeric comparisons to battle scenes in 1 and 2 Sam. are conveniently collected in Wajdenbaum, *Argonauts of the Desert*, 242–7.
113. Literary dependence of some Pentateuchal laws on Plato's *Laws* was first argued by Wajdenbaum, *Argonauts of the Desert*, 159–63, 175–8, 192–205. See further Gmirkin, *Berossus, Plato and Moses: Greek Sources and the Hebrew Bible* (forthcoming).
114. Gmirkin, *Berossus and Genesis*, 170–214.
115. *Ibid*., 89–139. Scholars of the past have typically discounted one especially striking parallel between the *Babyloniaca* and the biblical text, namely the world originating in 'darkness and water' in both texts, as a Jewish interpolation to the *Babyloniaca*. This passage was shown to be authentic and indicative of biblical literary dependence on the *Babyloniaca* at *ibid*., 96–100.
116. See Gmirkin, *Berossus, Plato and Moses*. The striking parallels between the fragment of Berossus at Josephus, *Ant*. 10.20–23 and 2 Kgs 19:37 have long been overlooked.
117. Gmirkin, *Berossus and Genesis*, 160–64.
118. *Ibid*., 215–21, 244.

The above examples of biblical texts that drew upon Greek sources, if accepted, show Jewish familiarity with literary texts from Archaic and Classical Greece, and from the Hellenistic east, and indicate that the composition of Genesis–Kings took place no earlier than 278 BCE. In *Berossus and Genesis*, I discussed other chronological indications that the Pentateuch was likely composed in the years 273–272 BCE, practically coinciding with the Septuagint translation by Jewish scholars at Alexandria in 273–269 BCE.[119] The composition of the Pentateuch in Hebrew, but drawing on Greek sources found in the Great Library of Alexandria, and at a date effectively contemporary with the creation of the Greek Septuagint, suggests that the books of Moses were both authored and translated into Greek by the Jews brought to Alexandria in *c*.270 BCE, utilizing Greek sources found in the Great Library. This model provides a concise explanation of the means whereby the biblical authors were exposed to the Greek literary sources that Genesis–Kings appear to draw on.

While a number of valuable studies comparing Greek and biblical laws have appeared in the past decade, so far these have been based exclusively on the notion of a shared Eastern Mediterranean culture in Persian and earlier times. Comparative studies that contemplate more direct cultural contacts between the Greek and biblical worlds would be very welcome. I hope that some of the other contributors to this volume are engaged in such research now. In a forthcoming study, I plan to present a comparative study on constitutions, laws and legal narratives in the biblical, Greek (Athenian) and ancient Near Eastern worlds.[120] A few preliminary results taken from this forthcoming book may serve to illustrate the direct influence Greek legal traditions had on the biblical text.

- Constitutional laws such as those found in Deuteronomy 16:18–18:22,[121] although found nowhere in the Ancient Near East,[122] have parallels throughout the Greek world.

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119. See *ibid*., 240–45 for the proposed date of 273–272 BCE; *ibid*, 81–6 on the date of the Septuagint translation.
120. Gmirkin, *Berossus, Plato and Moses*, chapters 2–5.
121. Overtly constitutional content found at Deut. 16:18–18:22 has been discussed by Norbert Lohfink, 'Distribution of the Functions of Power: the Laws Concerning Public Offices in Deuteronomy 16:18–18:22', *A Song of Power and the Power of Song: Essays on the Book of Deuteronomy*, Duane L. Christenson (ed.) (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1993), 336–55; Hagedorn, *Between Moses and Plato*, 108–71; Bernard M. Levinson, 'The First Constitution: Rethinking the Origins of Rule of Law and Separation of Powers in Light of Deuteronomy', *Cardazo Law Review* 27 (2006), 1853–88; Joshua A. Berman, *Created Equal: How the Bible Broke with Ancient Political Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).
122. The Xanthus Trilingual Inscription of 358 BCE is sometimes claimed to display 'constitutional elements', since it refers to a decree issued by the citizens of Xanthus to establish a new altar to a Carian deity; cf. Peter Frei, 'Persian Imperial Authorization: A Summary', *Persia and Torah: The Theory of Imperial Authorization of the Pentateuch*, James W. Watts (ed.), SBLSymp, 17 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2001), 5–40. However, the inscription contains no constitutional language whatsoever and provides

- Political organization into ten or twelve tribes was a historical feature of Athens and other Greek city-states,[123] but have no ancient Near Eastern parallel.
- Territorial divisions by tribe were found at Athens but absent in the kingdoms of the Ancient Near East.[124]
- Greek social institutions of phyle (*tribe*), brotherhood (*phratry*), clan (*genos*) and household (*oikos*) closely parallel biblical institutions. In both Athens and in the biblical text, kinship relations were closely integrated with inheritance laws, kinsman-avengers and levirate marriage.
- Democratic institutions such as the national assembly (*ekklesia*) and representative council (*boule*), invested with judicial, legislative and executive authority, have biblical and Hellenistic Era Judean counterparts with similar functions.
- Elected kings with limited powers, subject to law and under the oversight of guardians of the law (*nomophylakes*) – comparable to the office of king described at Deuteronomy 17:14-20 – are found at Athens and elsewhere in the Greek world, but are without parallel in the Ancient Near East.[125]
- Narratives that incorporated legal content, comparable to biblical stories about the origins of Mosaic law, are common in the Greek world, but are absent in the Ancient Near East, including in surviving law collections.

Such striking comparisons between biblical and Greek legal traditions – especially those associated with Athens – suggest much more direct contacts between Jewish and Greek culture and literature than contemplated in the past, even under the Westbrook model.

Prospects for research

In conclusion, Pentateuchal writings cannot be shown to pre-date the *Aegyptiaca* of Hecataeus of Abdera (*c*.315 BCE), much less the conquests of Alexander. The old assumptions regarding the antiquity and predominantly Near Eastern

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no evidence for the existence of constitutional documents in the Near East during the Persian period.

123. For the system of ten tribes implemented by Kleisthenes in *c*.500 BCE, see Herodotus, *Histories* 5.69–73; Aristotle, *Athenian Constitution* 22.1–3. Ten civic tribes were also found at Thurii and Brea. In 307/306 BCE, Athens formally adopted a system of twelve tribes by the addition of two new tribes named after the Macedonian generals, Demetrius Poliorketes and Antigonus Monophthalmus.
124. The constitutional reforms of Kleisthenes involved territorial allocations by tribe. Tribal territories were also assigned in the foundation of new colonies.
125. See the literature cited in the preceding note for the limited role of the king in Deut. 17:14-20. The role of the priests in enforcing biblical law in the Torah of the King appears to show acquaintance with the *nomophylakes* found in many Greek city-states, whose responsibility was to ensure that elected magistrates, including kings, executed their offices according to the laws.

character of the biblical text appear unwarranted and counter-productive. Indeed, an early Hellenistic Era date for the Hebrew Bible appears positively indicated by Greek literary and cultural – especially legal – comparisons. The consideration of Greek evidence for the Hebrew Bible must therefore include the whole of Greek literature, down to the Septuagint translation of *c*.270 BCE, which provides the first definite external proof of biblical writings.

The availability of this new corpus of literature for comparative purposes opens up a whole new frontier for biblical scholarship, with exciting new opportunities for fruitful research using the abundant Greek sources. The hard-fought legitimacy that the field of Greek comparative studies has begun to acquire may well fundamentally change the character of biblical research in the coming years. In many ways, the present situation compares to biblical studies in the aftermath of the 1902 publication of the Hammurabi Law Code, which inaugurated twentieth-century comparative studies between biblical and ancient Near Eastern literature. The twenty-first century has begun to usher in a new era, in which Greek comparative studies may make it possible, for the first time, to understand the biblical text in its true historical and cultural context.

4

The Philistines as intermediaries between the Aegean and the Near East

Łukasz Niesiołowski-Spanò

In this chapter, I will take the opportunity to point to a few aspects of the role played by the Philistines in the transference of culture from the Aegean region to Palestine.[1] However, before analysing the specific role of the Philistine in this process, some historical background is needed.

The end of the thirteenth century BCE was marked by great changes in the eastern part of the Mediterranean region. The power of the Hittites, centred in Anatolia, was heavily shaken; Mycenaean culture entered a deep crisis; and the political entities of Syria and Palestine had to face significant changes and a period of instability. Especially at the turn of the thirteenth and twelfth centuries BCE, there is evidence of big changes and stresses in what had become the increasingly international system of trade and communication in the eastern Mediterranean in the Bronze Age. This condition can be characterized as a sort of 'global' crisis and was precipitated by the significant and unusual movements of people in the region. There is no doubt that this migration and emigrations were reactions to the general instability and deep crises of the time. The people involved in this movement were taking risks by sea and/or overland travel, and by leaving behind their property and home community in order to look for new homelands. Their endeavours illustrate their determination or desperation.

Are we able to determine who did migrate and from where they originated? Despite, or perhaps because of, long scholarly debate on this issue, one may venture the hypothesis that, at this point, we have reached a kind of consensus in this matter. One of the invading groups mentioned by Merenptah and Ramses III is *rwk*, most probably Lukka, identified with people who originated in Lycia in Southwestern Anatolia. Furthermore, on the basis of descriptions of the Aegean region from the times of Amenhotep III, mentioning *Tnj/Tj-n3-jj-w*,[2] it is pos-

1. This chapter was written with the support of the Polish National Program for Development of Humanities.

2. Arielle P. Kozloff, *Amenhotep III: Egypt's Radiant Pharaoh* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 210–12; Eric Cline, 'Amenhotep III and the Aegean: A Reassessment of Egypto-Aegean Relations in the 14th Century BC', *Orientalia* 56 (1987), 1–36.

sible to identify Danuna (*dnynw*) listed on Ramses' III stelae with the Danaoi – that is, the people of the Aegean. The origins of the rest of the Sea Peoples are difficult to establish on the basis of their names. However, we do know that the newcomers brought elements of their material culture well-rooted in the Mycenaean world, such as the typical Mycenaean pottery called Myc. IIIc:1b. Some other technological innovations – for example, in architecture (hearths) and other aspects of material culture introduced in Palestine in the twelfth century BCE – have Mycenaean origins.[3] Furthermore, some Greek influences may be observed in the onomastics connected to Philistia (*'lwt*,[4] Achish)[5] and local cult (*ptgyh*/*ptnyh*).[6] These cultural affiliations prove that the migrating peoples – wherever they originated from – were under the strong influence of Mycenaean culture. The biblical tradition about the origins of the Philistines as being on the island of Crete/Kaphtor (Amos 9:7; Jer. 47:4), even if not decisively provable, provides another strong argument in favour of the hypothesis of Aegean origins of the Philistines and other Sea Peoples. However, there is no need to decide precisely where the Sea Peoples started their route; suffice it to say that the Sea Peoples originated within the Aegeo-Anatolian sphere, and were strongly dominated by Mycenaean culture.

Sometimes the problem with the identification of a certain group of people lies in the scholarly presupposition that one name always corresponds with another homogeneous group, understood in a similar way as a modern tribe or nation. It is far from certain that such a presupposition is justified. First, not all of the names listed in Egyptian sources have to describe groups of the same kind (being ethnic, social or geographical). Second, there is no reason to expect groups to be homogeneous and coherent, in the way that modern nations are. A large variety of intermediate stages of identity may be expected for groups

3. Assaf Yasur-Landau, *The Philistines and Aegean Migration at the End of the Late Bronze Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).
4. Aren M. Maeir, Alexander Zukerman, Stefan J. Wimmer & Aaron Demsky, 'A Late Iron I/ Early Iron Age II Old Canaanite Inscription from Tell eṣ-Ṣâfī/Gath, Israel: Palaeography, Dating, and Historical-Cultural Significance', *BASOR* 351 (2008), 39–71.
5. Seymour Gitin, Trude Dothan & Joseph Naveh, 'A Royal Dedicatory Inscription from Ekron', *IEJ* 48 (1997), 1–18; Joseph Naveh, 'Achish-Ikausu in the Light of the Ekron Dedication', *BASOR* 310 (1998): 35–7; E. Lipiński, *On the Skirts of Canaan in the Iron Age. Historical and Topographical Researches*, OLA 153 (Leuven: Peeters, 2006), 51–2. Cf. Ernest Renan, *History of the People of Israel till the Time of King David* (Boston, MA: Roberts Brothers, 1894; repr. Kessinger Publishing), 134; John P. Brown, *Israel and Hellas*, vol. 2, BZAW 276 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2000), 298.
6. Gitin *et al*., 'A Royal Dedicatory Inscription from Ekron', 1–18; English translation by K. Lawson Younger in W. Hallo (ed.), *The Context of Scripture*, vol. 2 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 164 (no 2.42); cf. also Aaron Demsky, 'The Name of the Goddess of Ekron: A New Reading', *JANES* 25 (1997), 1–5; Christa Schäfer-Lichtenberger, '*PTGJH* – Göttin und Herrin von Ekron', *Biblische Notizien* 91 (1998), 64–76; *idem*, 'The Goddess of Ekron and the Religious-Cultural Background of the Philistines', *IEJ* 50 (2000), 82–91; Shmuel Ahituv, *Echoes from the Past: Hebrew and Cognate Inscriptions from Biblical Period* (Jerusalem: Carta, 2008), 335–40.

in transition from one place to another. This would naturally include foreign nomenclature, language and material culture being introduced into the group as they moved along. Third, we do not know with what criteria the group defined itself, and, with few exceptions, how they were identified by others.

In this regard, the process of Greek colonization in the Archaic period provides a useful analogy. In theory, the colonizing group originated from one *polis* (or from a few *poleis*, usually named). However, in reality, such a result appears to have been unusual: the populations of the new colonies were created by a mixture of newcomers, the autochthonous population and the 'others', of different origins.[7] But one must not ignore the differences between the thirteenth-/twelfth-century phenomenon of the Sea Peoples and Archaic period Greek colonization. The people migrating at the end of the Bronze Age were the elites of the Mycenaean world, who did not move in voluntary search for a new homeland, but were desperately looking for shelter from the upheaval in their place of origin. They had to survive hunger, poverty and the total collapse of their old system. Some of the differences between these two episodes of transition of population are also found in the nature of their mode of travel or transport. The Greek colonists of the Archaic period travelled by sea, with a specific destination in mind. They had less opportunity to include, in their expeditions, people met along their way. It was different for the people travelling by land, who had many occasions to meet other people, who might have been attracted by the idea of a lengthy expedition to fertile Egypt, and who were welcomed as useful help.[8] These elites – let us for a moment accept that they originated in the Aegean region – on their way through Asia Minor, towards Syria and afterwards towards Egypt, met local elites, and joined their groups. Despite local differences between the Greeks and, for example, the Lycians, the fact that they were elites allowed them to find points in common. The key elements allowing the local elites to collaborate were common values. However, on what bases might we expect a decisive role for the elites in the people-movements of the thirteenth/twelfth centuries BCE? There are at least a few arguments in favour of the notion that this class was culturally important in the emigration: it was the elites who had the necessary means, allowing them to undertake such a risky and demanding journey. It was the elites who had indispensable knowledge about geography, and the world far from the homeland. It was the elites who could have organized and drawn the route to Egypt. And the very same elites used luxury pottery, which became the chief evidence of their presence in the Near East.[9]

I will venture the hypothesis that the population taking part in the Sea Peoples' migration were limited in number. However, thanks to their high social status, military and technological capacities, sophisticated needs and way of life, they

7. Cf. Irad Malkin, *The Returns of Odysseus: Colonization and Ethnicity* (Berkeley, CA: Univeristy of California Press, 1998).
8. Yasur-Landau, *The Philistines and Aegean Migration at the End of the Late Bronze Age*, 122–93.
9. David Ben-Shlomo, *Philistine Iconography. A Wealth of Style and Symbolism*, OBO 241 (Fribourg: Academic Press, 2010).

managed to dominate the subdued populations. As a consequence, the areas dominated by, for example, the Philistines, were subdued by only a minority of newcomers of Mycenaean origin. These 'conquistadors' of the late Bronze Age dominated only the highest social strata of the society. These members of a new elite managed to mix with local autochthonous elites, by – in part – introducing their own traditions and values, and – again, in part – accepting some local (that is, Canaanite) achievements. It is highly possible that the Philistine elites were attracted, for instance, by alphabetical writing, which was much easier than the linear one. The relatively large number of alphabetical inscriptions from the Philistia proper provides the best arguments in favour of this thesis. Obviously, there were more cultural components that were adopted by the new elite,[10] including their acceptance of the old city names.[11]

The Sea Peoples conquered the coastal plain, and shortly afterwards, the Philistines subdued the cities of the Shephelah. Still in the early stages of their presence in Palestine, thus during the life-span of the first – and second – generation of newcomers strengthened their rule over the conquered territories. The well-known Philistine expansion during the next decades formed the basis for their local hegemony.[12]

The Bible, despite traditional readings still popular among scholars, which deny such data, supports this reconstruction. As evidence, it should suffice to list the references mentioning the location of the Philistines' military garrisons. They had strongholds not only in Philistia and the Shephelah, but also in Bethlehem ('David was then in the stronghold; and the garrison of the Philistines was then at Bethlehem'; 2 Sam. 23:14), Gibeon ('After that you shall come to Gibeath-Elohim, at the place where the Philistine garrison is'; 1 Sam. 10:5; cf. 2 Sam. 21:2), Beth-Shan ('The next day, when the Philistines came to strip the dead, they found Saul and his three sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. They cut off his head, stripped off his armour … They put his armour in the temple of Astarte; and they fastened his body to the wall of Beth-Shan'; 1 Sam. 31:8-10) and probably in Jerusalem (2 Sam. 5:6-9, 18-25).

Nevertheless, despite the above, one may point to a paradox: namely, that in scholarly literature, the true area of the Philistines, Philistia, does not correlate with the distribution of 'Philistine' pottery.[13] Symptomatic is the statement of Trude Dothan in reference to Philistine territory: 'in actual fact the ethno-political entity known as the Philistines never exercised complete control for any considerable period over more than the territory delineated in Joshua 13.'[14] It is

10. Yasur-Landau, *The Philistines and Aegean Migration at the End of the Late Bronze Age*.
11. Itzhaq Shai, 'Understanding Philistine Migration: City Names and Their Implications', *BASOR* 354 (2009), 15–27.
12. This situation is to be seen on the map by Ernst A. Knauf, 'Saul, David, and the Philistines: from Geography to History', *Biblische Notizien* 109 (2001), 18.
13. Trude Dothan, *The Philistines and their Material Culture* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1982), 26; cf. John F. Brug, *A Literary and Archaeological Study of the Philistines* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 1985), 65.
14. Dothan, *The Philistines and their Material Culture*, 16–17.

hard to avoid the impression that this statement is not drawn from the archaeological data, but rather reflects a biblical viewpoint. If only the distribution and chronological sequence of pottery and other 'Philistine' artefacts are studied, then another area must be delineated.[15]

The more controversial issue is the extent, in Palestine, of the territory remaining under the influence of the Aegeo-Anatolian culture. Most scholars seem to be of the opinion that foreign influences were limited to the territory of Philistia, that is, Philistine territories known in the eighth and seventh centuries BCE. Only a few scholars opt for wider territory being under the direct and/or indirect influence of the Sea Peoples in Palestine.[16] Furthermore, not only the territory being dominated by the Sea Peoples, but also the forms and ways of intercultural exchange, are debated. An opinion dominates the scholarly debates (sometimes presumed *implicitly*, and not expressed openly), that holds that at the frontier – that is, neighbour-to-neighbour relations (here e.g. the Philistines and the Hebrews) – were the most important. However, there is also another possible scenario for cultural interchanges available, namely that there was direct influence in the territory of the 'weaker' part – that is, the Hebrews. It must be remembered that the newcomers were not only the Philistines, whose activities are, in most places, seen exclusively in the context of the reality of the eighth/seventh centuries BCE.[17] Some of the Sea Peoples were – probably – incorporated, with time, into the Israelite federation. If the identification of the biblical tribe of Dan with the name *Danuna*, from the Egyptian sources, is credited,[18] the very territory of Dan may be seen as the plausible sphere of intense contacts of the two groups. The same may be true for the North if one accepts the identification of Issachar as Iš-Tjeker (this hypothesis is generally not accepted by scholars).[19] On the other hand, there are strong indications that in the early Iron Age, most of the territory of the later Kingdom of Judah remained under the control of the Philistines.[20]

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15. This same situation is to be seen in other studies referring to Iron Age I or to the time of David, for example, Avraham Faust, *Israel's Ethnogenesis. Settlement, Interaction, Expansion and Resistance* (London: Equinox, 2007), 140; Mario Liverani, *Israel's History and the History of Israel* (London: Equinox, 2005), 92.
16. Knauf, 'Saul, David, and the Philistines: from Geography to History', 15–18; Othniel Margalith, *The Sea Peoples in the Bible* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz Verlag, 1994); Giovanni Garbini, *I Filistei: gli antagonisti di Israele* (Milan: Rusconi, 1997).
17. Israel Finkelstein, 'The Philistines in the Bible: A Late-Monarchic Perspective', *JSOT* 27 (2002), 131–67.
18. Yigael Yadin, '"And Dan, Why Did He Remain in Ships?" (Judges 5:17)', *Australian Journal of Biblical Archaeology* 1 (1969), 9–23; Yoel L. Arbeitman, 'Detecting the God Who Remained in Dan', *Henoch* 16 (1994), 9–14; Yoel L. Arbeitman & Gary Rendsburg, 'Adana Revisited: 30 Years Later', *Archiv Orientalni* 49 (1981), 145–57.
19. Garbini, *I Filistei*, 62–5.
20. Ł. Niesiołowski-Spanò, 'The Philistines in Jerusalem? The Use of Archaeological Data as the Ethnic Marker: the case of the Philistines, other Sea Peoples, and Judah', *Identity and Connectivity: Proceedings of the 16th Symposium on Mediterranean Archaeology,*

Thus, it can be justifiably posited that there were historical changes, influencing the political situation in Palestine in this period, and that obviously the relationships between the Philistines and the various other remnants of the Sea Peoples, with the Canaanites and Hebrews were complex and dynamic. For convenience, I allow myself to propose the following periodization of the relationships between the two groups, regarding the pre-exile period:

- Beginnings (*c*.1170–*c*.1100) – the first generations of immigrants settle and establish close relationships with the autochthonous population, within the limited territory of Philistia, introducing into the Canaanite culture some elements of their proper culture. The Egyptian presence in Palestine might mark this period as well.
- Expansion (*c*.1100–925) – the period of political and military domination of the Philistines and their kin over all of Palestine. The Sheshonk invasion brought a sudden end to this domination.
- Stagnancy (925–*c*.725) – the period of territorial limitation of the Philistines only to Philistia. Also, this period is characterized by the new political domination of the Kingdom of Israel in the region.
- Reactivation (*c*.725–*c*.640/630) – *Pax Assyriaca*, the period of flourishing of the Philistine cities under Assyrian protection. Prosperous Philistine cities developed in the Assyrian system, and economically dominated Judah.
- The End (*c*.640/630–600) – the withdrawal of Assyria and the presence of the Egyptians in Palestine put an end to the important position of the Philistines.

Since most of biblical traditions are rooted in Jerusalem and Judean traditions, Philistia and the territory of Dan have not provided, to date, as much evidence for Philistine–Hebrew/Canaanite interaction as is found in the area of Judah. Therefore, it is still not obvious that neighbours' interchanges alone create sufficient circumstances for cultural transfer, especially in the cases discussed below.[21] There are, however, reasons to reconstruct the presence of Philistines, and/or other people federated with them in the territory of Benjamin and future Judah. Biblical indications of Philistine garrisons in Gibeon and Bethlehem speak for themselves. The particular status of the Jebusites, and the non-Semitic name of the Jerusalem leader – Araunah – point in the same direction. Similarly,

Florence, Italy, 1–3 March 2012, L. Bombardieri, A. D'Agostino, G. Guarducci, V. Orsi & S. Valentini (eds), BAR International Series, 2581 (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2013), 89–96.

21. Theoretical models of intercultural exchanges were discussed by Christoph Ulf, 'Rethinking Cultural Contacts', *Ancient West and East* 8 (2009), 81–132.

one may mention an accumulation of non-Semitic proper names around Hebron (Khirbet Arba),[22] such as Anaq, Talmay, Sheshay and Ahiman.[23]

As far as Jerusalem is concerned, the enigmatic information about the Jebusites is not the only suggestion for the presence there of non-Semitic people.[24] There are a few elements in early biblical 'Jerusalem culture' for which Aegean origins can be proposed, which I will present below. If the hypothesis of their Western, that is Aegean, origins holds, the most probable explanation of this phenomenon would be the key role of the twelfth-century newcomers who settled in many different places in Palestine. This very population had to have some direct influence on Jerusalem, through its inhabitants, and culture, including the local cult. It is a well-known phenomenon that religious life and cults in particular are conservative and change slowly; nevertheless, one may ask when and how these foreign features entered the realm of Jerusalem. Interestingly, these features, now identifiable as non-Hebrew/Canaanite and arguably Aegean, were *not* seen (or remembered) by the biblical tradition as particularly foreign.

The term *debir* (דביר) in MT describes the interior space within the Jerusalem Temple, called the Holy of Holies, mentioned, for instance, in 1 Kings 6–8. The most popular explanation of this term links it with the root *dbr* – 'to speak' – not uncommon in Semitic languages. If such etymology were correct, the meaning of the name of Holy of Holies would have to do with speaking, most likely by oracles. This understanding finds support in the Vulgate, where the term *debir* is rendered by the word *oraculum*. The LXX, on the other hand, does not translate the term, using its transliteration: **dabir*. The form preserved in the LXX is different from MT in the first vowel and may point to the original vocalization.

Despite this traditional scholarly etymology, there is another way to explain the etymology of the word **dabir*. Giovanni Garbini suggests that the word denoting the Holy of Holies is related to a slightly modified term, known in Mycenaean Greek as *da-pu-ri-to*, meaning the inner chamber of the temple – the very abode of the deity.[25] A Linear B text from Pylos (Cn 1287) mentions

22. Yoel L. Arbeitman, 'The Hittite is thy Mother: An Anatolian Approach to Genesis 23', *Bono Homini Donum: Essays in Historical Linguistics in Memory of J. Alexander Kerns*, Y. Arbeitman & A. Bomhard (eds) (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1981), 889–1026; *idem*, 'Minōs, the Οαριστής of Great Zeus, ἀ, ά, and ó-Copulative, the Knossan Royal Titulary and the Hellenization of Crete', *A Linguistic Happening in Memory of Ben Schwartz*, Y. L. Arbeitman (ed.) (Louvain-la-Neuve: Peeters, 1988), 411–62.
23. Ł. Niesiołowski-Spanò, *Origin Myths and Holy Places in the Old Testament: A Study of Aetiological Narratives* (London: Equinox, 2011), esp. 118–40.
24. Cf. Ulrich Hübner, 'Jerusalem und die Jebusiter', *Kein Land für sich allein: Studien zum Kulturkontakt in Kanaan, Israel/Palästina und Ebirnari für Manfred Weippert zum 65. Geburtstag*, U. Hübner & E. A. Knauf (eds), OBO 186 (Fribourg: Academic Press, 2002), 31–42.
25. Giovanni Garbini, *Scrivere la storia d'Israele. Vicende e memorie ebraiche* (Brescia: Paideia, 2008), 77–8. Cf. Sarah P. Morris, *Daidalos and the Origins of Greek Art*

da-pu-ri-to-jo po-ti-ni-ja;[26] in addition, there is also the example mentioning *da-pu-ri-to-jo* as the palace of the goddess on one of the tablets from Knossos (Gg 702).[27] The term *da-pu-ri-to* appears in later Greek as *labyrinthos*.[28] If Garbini's hypothesis about the Greek origin of the term **dabir*, as the local adaptation of the technical term *da-pu-ri-to*, meaning 'the abode of the deity' in the temple, is accepted, one should investigate the means of introduction of this term to Jerusalem, and its temple. The most tempting answer would be linking this borrowing to the Sea Peoples, who influenced local religion in Palestine.

Importantly, this hypothesis is also supported by the biblical tradition. The origins of the Jerusalem temple – within biblical tradition – is openly linked to non-Hebrew traditions. Suffice it to recall here Melchizedek (Gen. 14), and Araunah (2 Sam. 24). Furthermore, the biblical account about the founding of the temple by Solomon, even if underlines its legality, admits its secondary (i.e. lower) status in opposition to the cult centres of the North (cf. 1 Kgs 12:26-7). Biblical tradition calls Jeroboam's religious actions sins and apostasy, but there are reasons to see them as the natural return to the old cult, and a reaction to the appearance of a competing centre in Jerusalem.[29] It is not inappropriate here to mention that one of the differences between legal Northern and secondary Jerusalem cult centres lies in the presence of the Levites in the latter (1 Kgs 12:31). Despite the Jerusalem-oriented point of view of the biblical authors, it is possible to observe, in the Bible, the recognition that the Jerusalem cult had some innovative elements in confrontation to traditional cult sites.

Also connected to the cult of the temple at Jerusalem was the presence of chambers, whose names are supposed to derive from Greek as well. The term

(Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995), 186, n. 138; John Chadwick & Lydia Baumbach, 'The Mycenaean Greek Vocabulary', *Glotta* 41 (1963), 216.

26. John H. Heller, 'A Labyrinth from Pylos?' *AJA* 65 (1961), 57–62.
27. *Ibid*., 61. Cf. also Francesco Aspesi, 'A margine del sostrato linguistico "labirintico" egeo-cananaico', *Proceedings of the 13th Italian Meeting of Afro-Asiatic Linguistic. Udine 2007*, F. M. Fales & G. F. Grassi (eds) (Padova: SARGON Editrice, 2010), 33–8; *idem*, 'L'ape e il labirinto. Un possibile nesso lessicale in ebraico nel quadro del sostrato egeo-cananaico', *XII Incontro Italiano di Linguistica Camito-semitica (Afroasiatica)*, M. Moriggi (ed.) (Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino, 2007), 127–38; Davide Astori, 'Rumanian *Tabără* and "Aegean-(pre)Philistine" **ʾ/a(a)br*', *Journal of Linguistic Studies* 3 (2010), 113–17.
28. Pierre Chantraine, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la Langue Grecque. Histoire des mots* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1999), 610–11. Regarding the term *da-po-ri-to-jo* and its connections to the Greek term *labyrinthos*, cf. Michele Guidi, 'Greco ΛΑΒΥΡΙΝΘΟΣ: note di linguistica mediterranea', *Minos* 25 (1990), 175–93; Ilya Yakubovich, 'Labyrinth for Tyrants', *Studia Linguarum* 3 (2002), 93–116.
29. Nicholas Wyatt, 'Royal Religion in Ancient Judah', *Religious Diversity in Ancient Israel and Judah*, F. Stavrakopoulou and J. Barton (eds) (London: T&T Clark, 2010), 66; Wesley I. Toews, *Monarchy and Religious Institution in Israel under Jeroboam I* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1993).

liškah/*niškāh* (לשכה/נשכה)[30] seems to indicate a space, located close to the temple, which hosted some kind of cultic activity. Only later, when cultic activities – due to their unorthodox nature (?) – ceased to be practised there, were they transformed into storage or living spaces. The term *liškah* describes, for example, the space where the cultic feast is held (1 Sam. 9:11-25), or a room next to the temple where wine is drunk (Jer. 35:1-5). The physical proximity to the temple points, in this case, to the ritual usage of the space, rather than a recreational use.

Walter Burkert interprets the word *liškah* as a loanword from Greek, and points to the Philistines as the possible transmitters of the term from the Aegean region to Palestine.[31] On the other hand, Rafał Rosół claims that it is the Greek word *lesche* that originated in Semitic *liškah*.[32] Common origins for both the Greek and Semitic words were also advocated in the languages of Anatolia.[33] Garbini, in turn, considers the Hebrew word *liškah*, with no satisfactory Semitic etymology, as a late, deliberate modification of the word *niškāh* under the influence of Greek in the Hellenistic era.[34] Against this view is found the common assimilation *l* > *n*, attested in Hebrew, for example, in *lḥš* > *nḥš*,[35] or the general tendency to render Semitic *l* with Indo-European *n*.[36]

In light of the aforementioned proposals, I am inclined to agree with Burkert, and interpret Hebrew *liškah* as a loanword from Greek. The Greek word *lesche*, which is not attested before Homer (*Od*. XVIII 329),[37] describes a room used for different purposes. Sometimes it is located next to, or within, a *temenos* or sacred enclosure (e.g. in the temple of Apollo in Delphi; Paus. X 25,1). One archaic usage of the word *lesche*, attested on an inscription from Kamiros on Rhodes (*IG* XII 1, 709), links the word with a grave or funerary ritual room (grave-chapel?), used, according to Burkert, for mourning rituals.[38]

Biblical attestations of *liškah*/*niškah* do not indicate the origins of the institution. The only explicit exception links the establishment of these rooms with

30. Renan, *History of the People of Israel Till the Time of King David*, 134; Cyrus H. Gordon, 'Homer and the Bible: The Origin and Character of East Mediterranean Literature', *HUCA* 26 (1955), 60–61, n. 33; John P. Brown, *Israel and Hellas*, vol. 1, BZAW 231 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1995), 141–2.
31. Walter Burkert, '*Lescha-Liškah*. Sakrale Gastlichkeit zwischen Palästina und Griechenland', *Religionsgeschichtliche Beziehungen zwischen Kleinasien, Nordsyrien und dem Alten Testament*, B. Janowski, K. Koch & G. Wilhelm (eds), OBO 129 (Fribourg: Academic Press, 1993), 19–38.
32. Rafał Rosół, *Frühe semitische Lehnwörter im Griechischen* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2013), 60–62.
33. Jan N. Bremmer, *Greek Religion and Culture, the Bible and the Ancient Near East*, JSRC 8 (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 164–6.
34. Giovanni Garbini, *Note di lessicografia ebraica* (Brescia: Paideia, 1998), 88–93.
35. Assimilation *l* > *n* is discussed in E. Lipiński, *On the Skirts of Canaan in the Iron Age*, 261, and esp. 304.
36. Brown, *Israel and Hellas*, Vol. 2, 96, n. 39.
37. Chantraine, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la Langue Grecque*, 632.
38. Burkert, '*Lescha-Liškah*', 24–5.

the advice of the Levites, in the time of Hezekiah (2 Chron. 31:11). This is most likely a late elaboration of the mythical story about the reforms conducted by this pious king (cf. 2 Kgs 18:1-8). However, *liškah* is mentioned already in earlier contexts: in the account about Samuel and Saul (1 Sam. 9:22), and the planning of the Jerusalem temple by David (1 Chron. 28:12).

In Nehemiah 12:44 (cf. Neh. 3:30), the term *niškah* means storage room. Less clear is the passage in Nehemiah 13:4-5, where the storage usage of the space is intended; however, later (v. 9), 'the grain offering and the frankincense' are mentioned. In sum, the exact functions of the rooms are difficult to determine. But one may ask whether the profane usage of the space as storage rooms is intended, and what was the reason for 'copying' a non-Semitic term for it?

In Jeremiah 35, the term *liškah* is used as the name of the place designed for wine-drinking in a cultic (?) context:

> Go to the house of the Rechabites, and speak with them, and bring them to the house of the Lord, into one of the chambers [לשכות]; then offer them wine to drink. So I took Jaazaniah son of Jeremiah son of Habazziniah, and his brothers, and all his sons, and the whole house of the Rechabites. I brought them to the house of the Lord into the chamber of the sons of Hanan [לשכת בני הנן] son of Igdaliah, the man of God, which was near the chamber of the officials [לשכת השרים], above the chamber of Maaseiah [לשכת מעשיהו] son of Shallum, keeper of the threshold. Then I set before the Rechabites pitchers full of wine, and cups; and I said to them, 'Have some wine.' (Jer. 35:2-5)

The term *liškah* did not mean – I venture to propose – a normal storage room, because the usage of a loanword for it would – in this case – remain inexplicable. Analogically, one may understand the origin of the term *pilegeš* (פילגש/פלגש), 'concubine'. Its apparently non-Semitic etymology makes us think that this word denoted a new institution and was not used of an ordinary non-wife woman. Women of such status obviously already existed in the Semitic world.

A long time ago, the word *pilegeš* was compared with Greek παλλακις/παλλακή, and Latin *paelex*, *-icis*.[39] To explain the foreign origins of the word within biblical Hebrew, one has to accept the innovative aspects of the denoted institution. If so, *pilegeš* ought not to be a 'normal' concubine, but rather a kind of a 'special-concubine'. Biblical usages of this term point to the royal con-

39. Renan, *History of the People of Israel Till the Time of King David*, 134; R. A. Stewart Macalister, *The Philistines: Their History and Civilization* (London: Oxford University Press, 1914; repr.: Wipf & Stock, 2004), 80; Ferdinand Bork, 'Philistäische Namen und Vokabeln', *AfO* 13 (1939–41), 228; Chaim Rabin, 'The Origin of the Hebrew Word *Pīlegeš*', *JJS* 25(3) (1974), 353–64; Saul Levin, 'Hebrew {*pi(y)lége̊š*}, Greek παλλακή, Latin *paelex*: the origin of intermarriage among the early Indo-Europeans and Semites', *General Linguistics* 23(3) (1983), 191–7; Brug, *A Literary and Archaeological Study of the Philistines*, 197; Brown, *Israel and Hellas*, vol. 1, 65–70; Garbini, *I Filistei*, 221–6, 241–2; E. Lipiński, *On the Skirts of Canaan in the Iron Age*, 549–51.

nection of *pilegeš*.[40] Personages who, according to the Bible, had *pilegeš* are: Caleb (1 Chron. 2:46, 48); an anonymous Levite (Judg. 19:1); Saul (2 Sam. 3:7, 21:11); David (2 Sam. 5:13, 15:16, 16:21-2, 19:6, 20:3, 1 Chron. 3:9); Solomon (1 Kgs 11:3); Rehoboam (2 Chron. 11:21); and Gideon (Judg. 8:31). Most of the figures mentioned above are depicted in royal or king-like style. Most of them are connected to the territory of Judah and Benjamin. Other biblical figures who possessed their own concubines were Nahor (Abraham's brother) and the mythical protoplast of the Arameans (Gen. 22:24). The particular position of *pilegeš* –Nahor's concubine, who gave birth to his four children – might be inferred from the fact that Abraham did not have one, contenting himself with one primary wife (*'iššāh*), Sara, one secondary wife (*'iššāh*), Keturah (Gen. 25:1-4), and one 'normal' slave-concubine (*'āmāh*), Hagar (Gen. 16, 21). Therefore, one may venture the hypothesis that, according to the biblical symbolic language, the possession of a proper *pilegeš* serves as a status-marker, reserved only for the highest social group.

All three terms discussed above suggest the possibility of the existence in Judah and Jerusalem of religious institutions of Aegean origin. These, in turn, may point to the Sea Peoples as the plausible intermediaries of this cultural transfer. However, this is not the end of the possible influence of Aegean culture upon religion in Judah.

One of the typical components of the cultic tradition of the Hebrews, described in the Bible, and attested in the archaeological finds in Palestine, are the so-called horned altars.[41] Cultic instruction regarding these kinds of altars states:

> You shall make the altar of acacia wood, five cubits long and five cubits wide; the altar shall be square, and it shall be three cubits high. You shall make horns for it on its four corners; its horns shall be of one piece with it, and you shall overlay it with bronze.
>
> (Exod. 27:1-2; cf. Exod. 29:12, 1 Kgs 1:50, Amos 3:14)

A similar, impressive altar, with horns on its four corners, was found in Beer-Sheba. Other examples of such cultic paraphernalia have been found in many other sites in Palestine, for example, Dan and Megiddo.[42] Keeping in mind the story about Adonijah and the role played there by the horns of an altar (1 Kgs 1:50-52), one may think that the very horns of an altar possessed religious meaning (cf. Amos 3:14). If such was the case, the list of literary descriptions of horned altars in the Bible, and archaeological finds of big slaughter altars

40. Cf. Rabin, 'The Origin of the Hebrew Word *Pīlegeš*', 362–4.

41. Amihai Mazar, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible: 10,000–586 BCE* (New York: Doubleday, 1990), 495, 500; Ziony Zevit, *The Religions of Ancient Israel: A Synthesis of Parallactic Approaches* (London: Continuum, 2001), 347.

42. Zevit, *The Religions of Ancient Israel*, 171–4, 301–2; Herbert G. May, *Material Remains of the Megiddo Cult* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1935), 6–8, 12–13, pl. XII.

may be expanded by the category of small incense altars with horns, found in numerous sites in Palestine.[43] Such altars were found during excavations in Ekron,[44] Yavneh[45] and, most recently, in Tell es-Safi (interestingly, with only two horns).[46] Despite the widespread presence of such altars in Palestine in the first millennium BCE, they are absent in earlier periods. Thus, a foreign inspiration should be considered. There are numerous earlier examples of similar horned altars on Cyprus, and they are best known in Greece.[47] Our understanding of the important role played by horned altars in the second millennium BCE in Greece[48] makes the suggestion of their transfer to Palestine very attractive.[49] Undoubtedly, the most plausible go-between would be the Philistines, and other Sea Peoples.

All of the above-mentioned aspects of Judahite religious activity may originate in the Aegean region. Interestingly, there is no hint that any memories of their 'foreign' origin was preserved. All of them are intended to be native, and as such they are not criticized, nor banned. Taking all this into consideration, the question of how and when all these religious institutions and their names got to Jerusalem must be asked. Furthermore, what made them become native, and caused their foreign origins to be forgotten?

First, the cultural transfer had to take place on the spot – for instance, in Jerusalem. It could not have been a case of frontier, neighbour-to-neighbour exchange, because such would usually leave the memory of 'alien' origins intact. Furthermore, the Bible preserved the tradition about 'others' – that is,

43. Marvyn D. Fowler, 'Incense Altars', *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, D. N. Freedman (ed.) (New York: Doubleday, 1992), s.v. Regarding incense offerings see Kjeld Nielsen, *Incense in Ancient Israel* (Leiden: Brill, 1986); Paul Herder, *The Development of Incense Cult in Israel*, BZAW 245 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1997); cf. also Nelson Glueck, 'Incense Altars', *Translating and Understanding the Old Testament. Essays in Honor of Herbert Gordon May*, H. T. Frank & W. L. Reed (eds) (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1970), 325–9.
44. Ephraim Stern, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible*, vol. 2: *Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian Periods (732–332 BCE)* (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 121–4.
45. Wolfgang Zwickel, 'Clay and Stone Altars and A Piece of Mortar', *Yavneh I: The Excavation of the 'Temple Hill' Repository Pit and the Cult Stands*, R. Kletter *et al*. (eds), OBO SA 30 (Fribourg: Academic Press, 2010), 105–9; (no CS46), plates 27, 162, 163.
46. http://gath.wordpress.com/2011/07/25/the-news-is-out-a-large-stone-altar-in-area-d (accessed 15 August 2011).
47. Arthur J. Evans, 'Mycenaean Tree and Pillar Cult and Its Mediterranean Relations', *JHS* 21 (1901), 99–204, esp. 135–8; Lewis R. Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907; repr. 2010), 4, 254.
48. Emilia Banou, 'Minoan "Horns of Consecration" Revisited: A Symbol of Sun Worship in Palatial and Post-Palatial Crete?', *Mediterranean Archaeology and Archaeometry* 8 (2008), 27–47, who suggests the solar aspects of the altars' horns.
49. Louise A. Hitchcock, 'Levantine Horned Altars: An Aegean Perspective on the Transformation of Socio-Religious Reproduction', *'Imagining' Biblical Worlds: Spatial, Social, and Historical Constructs. Essays in Honor of James W. Flanagan*, P. M. McNutt & D. M. Gunn (eds), JSOTSup 359 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 223–39.

not Hebrews (despite their being aborigines) in Jerusalem. Their presence may explain the origins of these institutions, even if it did not erase the legitimacy of these institutions. Second, the cultural exchange of these religious components has to be very old, because only old (i.e. traditional) institutions can gain the position of native elements and guarantee that the 'real' origin is forgotten. If such is the case, one may venture the hypothesis that all these words, and denoted entities, entered Jerusalem during the period of territorial expansion of the Philistines, in *c*.1100–925 BCE. This period saw the political and cultural domination of the Philistines over most of the territory of Palestine. Paradoxically, Jerusalem's cult is dated in the same period, according to the biblical mythical history.

Still, historical details of this period, and mechanisms of the process of cultural borrowing and assimilation ought to be studied in depth. However, one may legitimately venture the hypothesis that there are elements of Aegean culture sneaking under the tent of Shem, with the arrival of the Philistines, as early as the eleventh and tenth centuries BCE.

5

Narrative reiteration and comparative literature
Problems in defining dependency

Thomas L. Thompson

Introductory remarks

Genesis 9:27's pun on the name of Japheth, the patriarch of the peoples of coastal Anatolia (Gen. 10:2-5): 'May God make room [*hiphil* of *yph*] for Japheth; that he live in Shem's tents and Canaan be his slave', seems – from a historical-critical perspective – to refer to the expansion of the Macedonian empire into the Fertile Crescent (the tents of Shem) and the Egyptian empire.[1] Both the mixture of legendary[2] and historical[3] names, and the ideological rather than geographic placement of Genesis 10's eponyms,[4] are such that one cannot describe the extent text as a coherent politically and geographically oriented genealogy, as one might do with the genealogy of Ishmael (Gen. 25:12-18).[5] While the identity of the figure of Japheth, brother of Shem (patriarch of the peoples of Mesopotamia), is clearly

1. The room Noah will have God make for Japheth in the tents of Shem cannot, of course, imply a reference to the room which was made, for example, for historicized Philistines (Gen. 10:14), as is, in fact, claimed fifty years ago in the 1962 *The New Oxford Annotated Bible*, as such mythic Philistines are rather those of Ham than of Japheth. The biblical Japheth we have is indeed Hellenistic, whether or not it could have some more immediate early source than the one here suggested.
2. So Nimrod, the Jebusites, Amorites, etc. in Gen. 10:8-9, 16-17.
3. So Babel, Erek/Uruk, Akkad, etc. (Gen. 10:10).
4. For example, Canaan and the people of Caphtor as descendants of Ham (Gen. 10:6-14), on the one hand, and Cush's entrance into Assyria to build Nineveh, at the same time listing Assyria as a descendent of Shem, on the other (Gen. 10:12, 22).
5. For a clear analysis of the relationship to the historical Ishmaelites, see E. A. Knauf, *Ismael: Untersuchungen zur Geschichte Palästinas und Nordarabiens am Ende des 2ten Jahrtausends,* ADPV (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1989); on genealogies, see J. Henninger, 'Altarabische Genealogie', *Anthropos* 61 (1966), 852–70; J. J. Finkelstein, 'The Genealogy of the Hammurapi Dynasty', *JCS* 20 (1966), 95–118; A. Malamat, 'King Lists of the Old Babylonian Period and Biblical Genealogies', *JAOS* 88 (1968), 163–73; W. Röllig, 'Zur Typologie und Entstehung der babylonischen und assyrischen Königslisten', Lisan Mithurti: Festschrift Wolfram Freiherr von Soden zum 19.VI.1968 gewidment von Schülem und Mitarbeitem, AOAT 1 (Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker, 1969),

closely parallel to the figure of the Greek titan *Iapetos*, who was grandfather of Deucalion (the survivor in the Greek legend of the Flood), and whose wife was Asia (matriarch of the peoples of the Anatolian coast), the independence of these parallel figures is clearly marked by their very close but distinct referents within their respective literatures. If the fragmented nature of the genealogy in Genesis 10 can be understood as reflecting complex efforts at harmonizing a plurality of legendary and geographic elements, one might well consider Japheth and Iapetos as reflecting the Hebrew and Greek forms of a common figure within closely related mythologies. Moreover, whereas the figure of Iapetos is known from writers as early as Hesiod and Homer to pseudo-Apollodorus, while the Japheth we know is in a text implicating a Hellenistic context, these two mythic figures might be described as examples of an older and younger form of a single figure within the development of a common Eastern Mediterranean symbol system.

To the extent that the above argument allows that the significantly unique common ground shared by the biblical and Greek myth of Japheth/Iapetos implies a reiterating revision of the Greek myth by the biblical, it is systemically fragile in its dependence on the precedence of Greek forms of this myth. Biblical narratives rarely offer identifiable chronological markers. Whenever the chronological relationship between complex literary parallels involves motifs, themes and narrative patterns, a claim of relative dependence appears generally unproblematic, insofar as the paralleled texts are perceived as unique. This quality, however, may depend, as we will see, on the little that we know of the extent of the actual literary traditions available to biblical authors.[6] The complexity of what is shared between two texts has also encouraged judgments of dependency of one text on another.[7] As sketched below, however, the cultural-wide developments of stereotypical narrative motifs, plot-lines, themes, narrative structures and episode patterns, as well as scene and tale types, typically create a complex narrative rhetoric. The recognition of this precludes most judgments of direct literary dependence related to concrete examples of such tropes.

265–77; T. L. Thompson, *The Historicity of the Patriarchal Narratives: The Quest for the Historical Abraham*, BZAW 133 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1974), 311–14.

6. T. L. Brodie attempts to define a number of similar criteria on the basis of which judgments of direct dependency between distinct literary texts can be made in *Genesis as Dialogue: A Literary, Theological and Historical Commentary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), appendix I, 421–32; see also *idem*, *The Birthing of the New Testament: The Intertextual Development of the New Testament Writings* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2004), 43–9.
7. Brodie's seven types of his 'Indication b', which he refers to as internal or significant similarities, all frequently refer to just such paralleled complexity; cf. Brodie, *Birthing*, 44–6; D. Irvin & T. L. Thompson, 'Some Legal Problems in the Book of Ruth', *VT* 18 (1968), 79–99; *idem*, 'The Joseph and Moses Narratives', *Israelite and Judean History*, J. H. Hayes & J. M. Miller (eds) (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1977), 149–212, esp. 181–209; D. Irvin, *Mytharion: The Comparison of Tales from the Old Testament and the Ancient Near East*, AOAT (Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker, 1978); T. L. Thompson, 'A New Attempt to Date the Patriarchs', *JAOS* 98 (1978), 76–84.

Chronological priority, coupled with judgments of uniqueness shared between two texts and explicit or implicit citations of an earlier text, support judgments of dependency. Of course, Matthew's citation of 'the prophet' in Matthew 1:23 marks a clear dependence of his story of a virgin birth in LXX Isaiah 7:14. However, citations between texts are also implicit, as when Mark 15:34 cites Psalm 22:2 for Jesus' last words, creating an ironic episode that allows his hearers to misunderstand that he called to Elijah for help. This gloss not only identifies for us the citation in Mark 15:24 as clearly dependent on Psalm 22:19, but it also confirms his gospel's dependency on the Elijah–Elisha chain narrative in Kings for his construction of his figure of Jesus as a miracle-working prophet, serving his mythic theme of life's victory over death.[8]

Literary functions of genealogies and complex associations

The narrative projection in Genesis 10 of the spread of humanity after the Flood by means of the genealogies of Noah's sons, constructed on the basis of the names of nations and eponymous ancestors in the Fertile Crescent (Shem), the Egyptian empire (Ham) and Anatolia (Japheth), is a central segment of the comprehensive structure of Genesis by a ten-fold *toledoth* ('descendants'), introduced and linked by the reiterated *'eleh toledoth X* ('these are the descendants'; Gen. 2:4a; 6:9a; 10:1; 11:10, 27a; 25:12a, 19a; 36:1; 37:2a), with the singular exception of the internal title for Genesis, *zeh sepher toledoth 'adam* (Gen. 5:1a), marking Genesis as an etiological narrative.[9] Pivotal to this structure is the rhetorically effective revision of Genesis 10's Shem genealogy in Genesis 11:10-26, reorienting it to the following segments of the *toledoth* structure and providing an opportunity of marking a narratively significant divine call to a 'new generation', which separates Abraham, as *ger* ('stranger'), from 'his kin and his father's house' (Gen. 12:3) to bring him from Judean and Samaritan-Israelite exile in Chaldean Ur and Harran, in an ideal and united return to the land that Yahweh will show him.[10] Such narratively driven expansions of geographically oriented genealogies have long been recognized as typical of the

8. T. Brodie, *The Crucial Bridge: The Elijah–Elisha Narrative as an Interpretive Synthesis of Genesis–Kings and a Literary Model for the Gospels* (Collegeville, PA: Liturgical Press, 2000); see also *idem*, *Birthing*, 45; T. L. Thompson, *The Messiah Myth: The Ancient Near Eastern Roots of Jesus and David* (New York: Basic Books, 2005), 27–66.
9. S. Tengström, *Die Toledotformel und die literarische Struktur der priesterlichen Erweiterungsschicht im Pentateuch* (Gleerup: CWK, 1982); T. L. Thompson, *The Origin Tradition of Ancient Israel: The Literary Formation of Genesis and Exodus 1–23* (Sheffield: SAP, 1987), 167–72.
10. For a discussion of the theme of exilic return, related to both Jews and Samaritans, see T. L. Thompson, 'Memories of Return and the Historicity of the "Post-Exilic" Period', *The Reception and Remembrance of Abraham*, Perspectives on Hebrew Scriptures and Their Contexts 13, P. Carstens & N. P. Lemche (eds) (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2011), 103–30.

genealogies of Genesis.[11] In fact, this narrative function of genealogies and eponyms is well known in Greek, Latin and Arabic literature.[12] For example, Diodorus Siculus refers to the patriarch Aeolus and his twelve children, all of whom are eponymous ancestors for their respective settlements,[13] and Pindar tells of Lokrus, who adopted Opus and became the eponymous hero of the city of Opus, which was in the district of Lokris.[14] Such stories are also, like those in the Bible, expanded with stories associated with the eponyms. The eponymic ancestors, Danaos and Aegyptus, are brothers. Aegyptus has fifty sons who wish to marry Danaos' fifty daughters. Danaos, however, prevents the weddings by sending his daughters in a ship with fifty oars to Argos. Aegyptus' fifty sons give chase, and all but one of them is murdered. The survivor becomes king of Argos.[15] Even closer to the biblical eponymic lists,[16] and tied to claims of ethnic purity, an Arab tradition, with roots as early as the third century CE, claims ancestry from Qahtam, who is the father of Ya'rab and eponymic ancestor of the Arabs, as well as of one of the regions of Arabia. Given the relatively late date, this tradition is possibly derivative of Genesis 10:25's earlier Yoktan.

The structure of the genealogy of Genesis 5, tied as it is to succession to the image of God from Adam to Noah, reflects a very close link between genealogies and king lists. The often fictive use of genealogical forms, attributing a family-structured, dynastic succession from father to son, is also asserted in the very loose construct of five Esau genealogies offered in Genesis 36. The first begins by presenting Esau's wives, Adah, Oholibamah and Basemath, and then these same wives with the children they bore in Canaan: Adah with her son Eliphaz, and Basimath and her son Reuel, closing with Oholibamah and her three sons, Jeush, Jalam and Korah (Gen. 36:1-5), in a pattern that reiterates the closure of Shem's genealogy with Terah's three sons, Abram, Nahor and Haran (Gen. 11:26). The genealogy is expanded with Esau's move to Seir in a narrative, paralleling a motif in the Abram–Lot story in Genesis 13:6 that his and Jacob's possessions exceeded the capacity of the land to bear them (Gen. 36:6-8). After the move to Seir, the genealogy shifts a generation to list the sons of Eliphaz's six sons and Reuel's four, but referring to them, somewhat inconsequently, as sons of Adah and Basemath, with the exception of Eliphaz's sixth son, the son of his eponymic concubine, Timna. The genealogy then closes with a reiteration of Oholibamah's three sons, which she bore to Esau (Gen. 36:9-14). The following segment (Gen. 36:15-19) offers a paraphrase of the same genealogy in the form of a list of the chiefs of Esau; that is, Edom – adding, however, the name Korah as the fourth of seven sons of Eliphaz. This, in turn, is followed by a third list of 'the sons of Seir, the Horite, the inhabitants of the land', defining them in closing

11. M. D. Johnson, *Purpose of the Biblical Genealogies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969).
12. Thompson, *Historicity of the Patriarchal Narratives*, 311–12.
13. Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca* IV, 67:2–7.
14. *Olymp.* IX, 62.
15. Pseudo-Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca* II.I.4.
16. Thompson, *Historicity*, 312–13.

as 'chiefs of the Horites, according to their clans' (Gen. 36:20-30). A fourth list presents a mock king-list for Edom, which begins, interestingly, with the name of Bela, son of Be'or. This name is a clearly secondary corruption of the name *Bil'am ben Be'or*, the prophet of Numbers 22–4, who appears in a similar role in the inscription from Deir 'Alla of the eighth–seventh centuries BCE.[17] Edom's king-list closes with a brief description of Hadar's city and wife (Gen 36:31-9). A final fifth list offers the names of eleven eponymous 'chiefs of Esau'/'chiefs of Edom', including the near-ubiquitous Oholibamah, which closes on the note that Esau was the father of Edom (Gen. 36:40-43).

Some forty-five years ago, Abraham Malamat published an analysis of a genealogy that presented the entire genealogy of Hammurabi's dynasty.[18] As in Greek, Arabic and biblical genealogies, one finds here a wide range of both historical and fictive eponyms of tribes, cities and geographical regions. Four different genealogical forms are identified in this dynastic list. The first, which Malamat compares to Genesis 11's Shem genealogy, lists personal names, toponyms, appellatives and tribal names in the form of eponyms. The second is a table of ancestors – predominantly West Semitic tribal names, comparable to the *toledoth* of Ishmael and Jacob – functioning as a bridge between the first type and the West Semitic historical dynasties of Assyria and Babylon. A third type, a fictive 'table of ancestors', represented chiefs, who preceded the established dynasties. Malamat compares this with the genealogy of David in Ruth 4:18-22, or of Saul in 1 Samuel 9:1. The final type, Malamat calls the 'historical line', and he compares with the synchronisms of successive reigns of Judah and Israel in the Books of Kings. His description of the form of these lists as historical, however, may be more than can be said from the perspective of comparative literature, for Esau's fourth list and the *toledoth* of Adam reflect a literary form comparable to what we find in Kings and Chronicles. All have numerous, unequivocally fictive characteristics. A shared typology no more determines the historicity of a literary structure than it gives grounds for asserting a dependent relationship between texts. Rather, arguments, supporting an assumption of historicity, and arguments, asserting a relationship of direct dependence between specific texts, require evidence. Parallels are found in abundance, which, nevertheless, are widely separated linguistically, geographically and chronologically in such a frequency that they suggest an ideologically and cultural-historically based coherence, rather than a relationship rooted in the decisions of their authors.

17. H. Franken, 'Deir 'Alla', *Encyclopedia of Archaeological Investigations in the Holy Land* I, M. Avi-Yonah & E. Stern (eds) (New York: Prentice Hall, 1978), 321–4; *idem*, *Excavations at Deir 'Alla I* (Leiden: Brill, 1969).
18. A. Malamat, 'King Lists of the Old Babylonian Period and Biblical Genealogies', *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 88 (1968), 163–73. On the original publication of the genealogy, see J. J. Finkelstein, 'The Genealogy of the Hammurapi dynasty', 95–118; W. Röllig, 'Zur Typologie und Erstehung der babylonischen und assyrischen Königslisten', 265–77.

An interrelated symbol system?

It is important to recognize that also in the ancient world, narratives – whether oral or written – have a tendency to travel as much as other products, and that the cultural and intellectual worlds of the East Mediterranean and the Fertile Crescent function on the basis of an interrelated symbol system of considerable complexity, brought together within a geographic, chronologic and linguistic spectrum of astonishing breadth and flexibility. Such fundamental literary tropes, thematic elements, narrative patterns and tale-types have a mobility exceeding the travels of any specific literary work or author. In illustration, the results of three analyses might be summarized: the well-known episode of what the Enuma Elish has dubbed 'the birth of a hero',[19] the stereotypic thematic element or motif and motif cluster of what I have called 'the poor man's song', and the tale-type 'Testimony of the Good King'.

The 'birth of a hero' episode is not only well known and recognized in ancient Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Syrian, Hittite, Homeric, classical Greek, Latin and biblical literature, with such famous stories of both human and divine children such as Marduk, Horus, Sargon and Oedipus, but such narratives also feed and are fed by the royal ideology surrounding kingship in which they are centred. Hardly was there a great king in antiquity who avoided using the epithet: 'son of God'. Given such propaganda, what great author would avoid such a fertile source for mocking song or ironic tale? In the late and – from the perspective of comparative ancient Near Eastern studies – derivative literature of the Bible, a hundred such figures are mirrored in stories from the creation of Adam and Eve (Gen. 2–3) and the birth of Cain (Gen. 4) to Luke's stories of Jesus and John (Lk. 1–2). One can hardly be exhaustive or comprehensive. Sons of God stand at every turn of ancient literature. Nearly all who are born in the Bible celebrate a 'birth of a hero': Samson, possessed by the divine spirit (Judg. 13–16) and Solomon, equally possessed by God's wisdom (2 Kgs 3); inspired craftsmen; the Hephaestus-like Bezalel (Exod. 31:2-3; 35:30) and prophets in great clusters – a hundred at a time, speak for God. Moses becomes God for Pharaoh and Aaron is his prophet (Exod. 6–7). Priests and kings, messiahs all, are anointed with an eternal oil. And one must never forget Arab Job, treated as an enemy, though he crushed the head of the evil one (Job 29). Even Yahweh himself is a son of 'El 'Elyon (Deut. 32:8).[20]

The 'song of a poor man' is a literary trope, consisting of a motif or cluster of motifs, centred in the idealistic theme of concern for the poor and the oppressed, the earliest contexts for which – as early as the mid-third millennium – are deeply rooted in ancient Near Eastern royal ideology, where it is stereotypically used to celebrate the miraculous reversal of the fortunes of the poor. This marks the

19. In biblical studies, the standard work dealing with such episodes is R. E. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke* (New York: Anchor, 1993).
20. See further my discussion in T. L. Thompson, *The Bible in History: How People Create a Past* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1999), 323–74.

inauguration or renewal of a king's rule and offers a vision of utopia: a world without war as the transcendent truth of every good king's governance.[21] In religious and philosophical writings, it commonly functions as an evocation of justice and divine rule, often mythically marking themes of divine judgment and a transcendent victory over the evil one. It also offers examples of the good and pious life, providing an element of mimesis to autobiographical tales, by presenting the good king as hero and role model for his people.[22] The lyrical song for the inauguration of Ramses IV's reign announces the good news of his kingdom.

> O Happy Day! Heaven and earth are in joy. They who have fled have returned to their homes; they who were hidden live openly; they who were hungry are filled and happy; they who were thirsty are drunken; they who were naked are clothed in fine linen; they who were dirty are dressed in white; they who were in prison are set free; they who were chained rejoice; the troubled of the land have found peace … the homes of the widow are open [again] so that they might let wanderers come in. Womenfolk rejoice and repeat their songs of jubilation … saying, 'male children are born [again] for good times; for he brings into being generation upon generation. You ruler, life, prosperity, health! You are for eternity!'[23]

This good news of a divine kingdom is reiterated not only by the good news opening *The Gospel of Mark*, but also in eight-fold illustration in Matthew's most famous 'sermon on the mount' and in the curses and blessings of Luke's variant.[24] It is, above all, through Isaiah's development of this trope as a leitmotif of his poetry that the ancient Near Eastern tradition is transmitted to the writers of texts from Qumran and the New Testament. In Isaiah's eight-fold proclamation of a year of grace, salvation is epitomized:

> Yahweh will give a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit that they might be called oaks of righteousness, plantings of Yahweh that he might be glorified. They will build up the ancient ruins; they will raise the former devastation; they will repair the ruined cities and the devastation of many generations. (Isa. 61:2-3)

Divine retribution finds expression within this same reversal:

> Thus says the God Yahweh: Behold my servants will eat, but you will be hungry; behold my servants will drink, but you will be thirsty; behold my

21. For a preliminary description of this trope based on some 240 occurrences in Ancient Near Eastern, Qumranic and biblical texts, see Thompson, *Messiah Myth*, 107–35; 323–35.
22. Job 29 is a particularly clear example of this function: T. L. Thompson, 'Job 29: Biography or Parable?', *Frelsens biografisering,* T. L. Thompson & H. Tronier (eds), Forum for bibelsk eksegese, 13 (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum, 2004), 115–34.
23. Thompson, *Messiah Myth*, 327.
24. *Ibid*., 326–7; Mark. 1:1-3; Matt. 5:3-12; Luke 6:20-27.

> servants will rejoice, but you will be ashamed; behold my servants will sing with joy of heart, but you will cry with sorrow of heart and you will cry with anguish of spirit. (Isa. 65:13-14)

The clustering of elements within known literary patterns allow us to identify and confirm associations between different texts, which goes well beyond the relatively simple identification of stock motifs in a variety of texts, and helps identify the literary traditions that are commonly shared by narratives. The 'Testimony of the Good King' is – in the language of comparative literature – a tale-type.[25] It is a narrative construct that uses up to twelve stereotypical thematic functions to tell the story of a king's life and reign.[26] Based on an earlier analysis of thematic elements associated with royal ideology in the ancient hymns of Thutmosis and Merneptah,[27] twelve thematic functions were identified. Beginning with the dedication of the memorial and a statement of legitimation, a narrative followed which presented the king as chosen client of his divine patron. This was followed by a declaration of innocence, piety or virtue in the performance of his office and then by a narrative of past suffering, involving his deity as the primary cause of change. This narrative closes in a victory over hardship, suffering, evil or the enemy and the reversal of the king's destiny. The inscription closes in honour of the king's name, a statement regarding building projects and a declaration of the good news of his reign in the fullness of time, leaving all in a utopian peace. These twelve functions typically find their story's closure in three further tropes: a blessing for or advice to the king's successor, curses on those who damage the inscription or the king's renown, and a prayer for divine protection. The central functions of this tale-type were systematically identified in twenty royal inscriptions from Mesopotamia, Anatolia and Syria, and compared with the Mesha stele. Three of the inscriptions used all twelve functions, while eight others employed eleven functions and three inscriptions used ten functions, with an average of 9.7 functions engaged by the twenty-one

25. A comparative analysis and classification of this tale-type, comparing the story of Mesha on the Moabite stone with twenty similar narratives, is presented in T. L. Thompson, 'A Testimony of the Good King: Reading the Mesha Stele', *Ahab Agonistes: The Rise and Fall of the Omride Dynasty,* L. L. Grabbe (ed.), European Seminar in Historical Methodology, 6 (London: T&T Clark, 2007), 236–92; an earlier presentation of this research within a discussion of ancient Near Eastern royal ideology can be found in Thompson, *Messiah Myth*, 139–69 and a further analysis of the implications of this analysis for judgments of historicity in T. L. Thompson, 'Mesha and Questions of Historicity', *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* 212 (2007), 241–60.
26. The method of this analysis is similar to that of Irvin, *Mytharion*, as well as M. Liverani, Partire sul carro, per il deserto, *AION* 32 (1972), 403–15; *idem*, 'Rib-Adda, giusto sufferente', *Altorientalische Forschungen 1* (1973); *idem*, 'Memorandum on the Fictional Accadian Autobiography', *Orientalia* 42 (1973), 178–94; J. Sasson, *Ruth* (Baltimore, MD: Anchor, 1979); V. Propp, *Morphology of the Folktale* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1968).
27. T. L. Thompson, 'Kingship and the Wrath of God: Or Teaching Humility', *RB* 109 (2002), 161–96.

inscriptions analysed. No inscription used fewer than six of these functions to describe its king's life and reign. The surprising similarities of these texts in both content and structure were such that one must not only see them as belonging to a common tale-type, reflecting a shared symbol system, but also judge the many parallel motifs between these texts as rooted in a common scribal tradition, rather than a discrete borrowing from a given text.

Far more important are the insights such monumental inscriptions provide into the literary techniques, patterns and thematic elements they have in common with both biblical and Greek traditional literature. Another fictional autobiography, adhering closely to this tale-type, is the story of Adad-Guppi, the mother of Nabonidus. It displays a considerably rich metaphorical language of piety, which it shares with the Psalter: 'walking in the path of righteousness', 'praying day and night', dressing herself in 'torn sackcloth', praising the gods and serving them food. All reflect such a shared literary world of the ancient Near East, that we would be ill-advised to suggest any direct dependence of the Psalter on this famous mother of Babylon.[28] Comparative literature clearly demonstrates that the narrative techniques, motifs and themes of biblical literature were solidly in place long before any single biblical story was written.[29]

The story of David in the wilderness is closely related to the thematic function of past suffering in the 'Testimony of the Good King'.[30] King Saul offers both riches and his daughter in marriage to the one who answers Goliath's challenge to a duel (1 Sam. 17:25), setting the stage for David's certain death (1 Sam. 18:17). Answering Saul's call, and with his divine protector reversing the expected, David kills Goliath and – of humble stock, poor and unfit to be the son of a king – demurs the promised reward. Saul sets a second trap: a bride-price for the daughter David loves is set at 100 Philistine foreskins – a heroic challenge that David cannot refuse. When he returns with 200, the story of a shepherd boy, the youngest among his brothers, is crowned as a humble man's victory over a proud king (1 Sam. 18:18-30; cf. 1 Sam. 2:4-9).

The story has a long history. Egyptian, Syrian, Assyrian and Babylonian stories all share a common foundation in literature from at least the early Middle Bronze Age, each displaying a strongly independent voice, but all built on the basis of a shared cluster of thematic elements.[31] Sinuhe is introduced through his suffering, which opens his story with the death of Amenemhet I. Fear of civil disorder causes him to flee into the wilderness of Retenu, somewhere east of Byblos. He takes refuge with a tribal chief and becomes rich, himself the

28. W. W. Hallo (ed.), *Context of Scripture I: Canonical Composition from the Biblical World* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 477–8.
29. Thompson, *Messiah Myth*, 169.
30. This and the following paraphrase the discussion in T. L. Thompson, 'Archaeology and the Bible Revisited: A Review Article', *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* 20(2) (2006), 286–313.
31. This same tale-type is reused to structure the opening chapters of 1 Maccabbees: see further I. Hjelm, *Jerusalem's Rise to Sovereignty: Zion and Gerizim in Competition*, CIS 14 (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 200–73.

ruler of a tribe. Over many years, he illustrates the song of the 'poor man' in our earliest example of the tale of the 'Good Samaritan'; he cares for the stranger, gives water to the thirsty, helps the traveller who was lost and ransoms he who had fallen into the hands of robbers. Sinuhe is made the commander of his patron's army and, successful (with echoes in the Joseph story), is placed at the head of all his rulers' household. He is challenged to a duel by 'a mighty man of Retenu'. At dawn, with the whole of Retenu mourning his most certain death, Sinuhe allows his giant the first opportunity, but after deftly dodging the mighty man's weapons, he lets loose a single arrow: a shot through the mighty man's neck! With this victory, Sinuhe rises to greatness and, eventually, returns home.

Although Idrimi gets no giant to fight, his story belongs to the same tale-type as Sinuhe's. The youngest among his brothers, thinking thoughts no one else thinks, Idrimi enters the desert exile of Palestine, becoming patron over a *Hapiru* town for seven years. Finally, called by the divine Adad to become king, he builds a ship, takes soldiers and returns home to Alalakh. The Hurrian great king, Barratarna, is his enemy for seven years, throughout which Idrimi declares his loyalty as vassal and finally becomes the king of Alalakh and reigns for thirty years. He does what he pleases, fights enemies, shares his wealth with his family, builds himself a palace, reverses the fate of the poor and establishes proper worship.

Panamuwa's sufferings compete with those of Saul. His father and seventy brothers are killed, while Panamuwa alone escapes. Prisons and ruins became more numerous than towns. Chosen by the king of Assyria as king of Y'dy in place of his father, he too follows 'the poor man's song', 'killing the stone of destruction', protecting the poor and the widowed, organizing good government and becoming famous, rich, wise and loyal. At his death – with echoes in the story of Joseph – he is mourned by the Assyrians, as his body is transferred in great honour to Assur.

The gods were angry. Esarhaddon and Babylon suffer both flood and an exile, divinely destined for a Jeremiad seventy years. Marduk, however, choosing Esarhaddon to be Babylon's saviour, reverses this destiny and orders his return in the eleventh year.[32] Esarhaddon, too, was youngest among his brothers. Humble and in awe of his great task, he rebuilt Babylon's walls and restored its temple, freed slaves and helped the poor, praying – with Solomon – that his house, temple and Babylon be eternal and that he rule in wisdom to a ripe old age.

Nabonidus' 'Testimony' expands the spectrum of thematic elements adhering to this tale-type. An only son and alone in the world, he is chosen by the gods in a dream to rebuild the temple in Harran. Since, however, the people of Babylon had sinned, Nabonidus must wander in the desert for ten years, while Sin appoints guardian deities to watch over our Elijah-like hero. Ishtar forces his enemies to become his clients, while Nergal breaks all the weapons of his eternal enemies in Arabia, forcing them to submit to his patronage. Shamash causes the

32. The similarity of the cuneiform signs with the value of 1 and 60 is such that the number 70 (60+10) when written in reverse order reads 11 (10+1).

people to love him and, at a divinely appointed time, the gods and Nabonidus return home to build Sin's temple and restore the gods to their places.

Cyrus is beloved of Bel and Nabu, and is promised an eternal dynasty. He will save the gods and the people from their great suffering, when the gods had abandoned Babylon and all the people had become corpses. Marduk searched all the lands for a righteous king and called Cyrus by his name to be king over all the world.[33]

Conclusion: hiding sources

Given this discussion of thematic elements, motifs, structural patterns and tale-types, claims of direct borrowing and dependence within interrelated cultures are supported by the uniqueness of the parallel and chronological difference, particularly if one might argue for an implicit evocation or citation of the earlier source text. Such criteria are demanding, and rarely unequivocally fulfilled, as biblical and ancient Near Eastern literature is typically silent about, disguises or hides its sources, and explicitly cited sources are stereotypically bogus.[34] Moreover, the pervasive allegory of narrative discourse creates an ever-recurrent expansion of parallels and reiteration as an ordinary mode of composition. Qohelet would agree that borrowing and reiteration are so much the norm of ancient literature that sources become anonymous. 'What had once been written will be written again' (Eccl. 1:9). However, this is not to deny the integrity of our literature.

In closing, let us consider just two examples in which source texts can be identified to help clarify this point. The narrative in Isaiah 36:1–39:8, the story of Hezekiah and Sennacherib – apart from the song of Hezekiah in 38:9-20 – also finds a place in the narrative of 2 Kings (2 Kgs 18:13–20:19, with the addition of 18:14-16). Ingrid Hjelm has argued convincingly, on the basis of linguistic evidence, that the Hezekiah narrative had its original provenance in Isaiah.[35] Moreover, 2 Kings alters the Hezekiah sickness episode and excludes the song, in order to delay the disaster that will come over Jerusalem at the close of 2 Kings.[36]

Such bilateral integration in the inclusion of borrowed segments can also be seen in the reuse of the messianic Psalm 18, which, in accord with its declared context within David's life (cf. Ps. 18:1; 2 Sam. 22:1), at the close of the David story in 2 Samuel 22, is placed just before David's final words and after the tired

33. For the translation see M. Cogan, 'Cyrus Cylinder (2.124)', *The Context of Scripture 2: Monumental Inscriptions*, W. W. Hallo (ed.) (Brill: Leiden, 2003), 314–16.
34. On bogus citations in ancient literature, see the dissertation of Katherine M. Stott, 'Rereading the "Books" of the Hebrew Bible: A Comparative Study of References to Written Documents in the Hebrew Bible and Classical Literature' (University of Queensland, 2005).
35. Hjelm, *Jerusalem's Rise*, 93–168.
36. *Ibid*., 46.

king retired from the battlefield, while his men, taking over for him, defeated the Philistines, by killing four giants (2 Sam. 21:15-22), and made a final reconciliation with the House of Saul (2 Sam. 21:10-14). It is also integrated in the Psalter through the instructions: 'To the choirmaster, a song of David, the servant of Yahweh', a verse absent in the Psalm's secondary reiteration in 2 Samuel 22.[37]

37. On the style and nature of headings of the Psalm of the Psalter, which refer to settings in which they were sung in the David story of 1–2 Sam., see T. L. Thompson, 'Historie og teologi i overskrifterne til Davids salmer', *Collegium Biblicum Årsskrift* (1997), 88–102.

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II

Greek-Jew or Jew-Greek?

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6

Stranger and city girl

An isomorphism between Genesis 24 and Homer's *Odyssey* 6–13

Yaakov S. Kupitz

Introduction

Evidence for the influence of Classical Greek in general, and of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in particular, on the Hebrew Bible (or Old Testament) became so bulky, as well as common, in the past two decades, that there is no need for an excuse for comparing the Bible with Classical Greek literature. Let me make just three remarks.

(a) Such a comparison is enriching and instructive at all levels of biblical research (Biblical Hebrew, text criticism, etc.), so that even the recent breakthrough book wholly devoted to such a comparison by Philippe Wajdenbaum, *Argonauts of the Desert*, hardly exhausts this relatively new discipline.[1]

(b) Homer became so canonized, in the post-classical and Hellenistic eras, that even the most renowned authors used to draw much from him. For instance, many verses of Virgil's *Aeneid* and Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica* are modelled on Homeric passages, as has been convincingly shown by Virginia Knight.[2] In a similar way, the biblical authors drew much from Homer, but not only from him. Many passages draw on Herodotus, Plato, Aristophanes, Euripides, Sophocles, Xenophon and Aesop, as if 'combing' this vast literature, and adapting it to national-religious purposes in order to build a national religious history of Israel. In this respect, there is no distinction between allegedly 'older' or 'later' books. All biblical books, whether of the Torah (Pentateuch) or of the Prophets, Psalms or so-called Wisdom books and so on are *uniformly full* of motifs from Classical Greek literature.

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1. Philippe Wajdenbaum, *Argonauts of the Desert: Structural Analysis of the Hebrew Bible*, Copenhagen International Seminar (Sheffield: Equinox, 2011). For an introduction to this discipline, see *ibid*., 'Introduction' (1–91).
2. Virginia Knight, *The Renewal of Epic: Responses to Homer in Apollonius' Argonautica* (Leiden: Brill, 1995).

(c) Biblical Hebrew has many Greek loanwords, some of which are integral to biblical Hebrew. It is a pity that this important (and fascinating) aspect of Greek influence on the Hebrew Bible is not yet recognized, as it is concealed from the average reader for two obvious reasons: to see a Greek word in biblical Hebrew, one must read the text in its *original* Hebrew, and also one must be acquainted with *both* ancient languages. This is, of course, rare.

The present study reads and compares two texts: Genesis 24, in which Avraham's servant meets Rivka on the outskirts of her city and then goes to meet her family, and Homer's *Odyssey* 6–13, the so-called 'Phaeacian books' of the *Odyssey,* in which Odysseus meets Nausicaa at the outskirts of her city, before going to meet her family. This comparison reveals an isomorphism of high resolution between the two texts, showing that nearly every verse in Genesis 24 has been modelled on some passage or idea of *Odyssey* 6–13. Before beginning, the reader is invited to read both texts, to get some feeling for their content and charming romantic mood.[3]

Method of comparison

The chapter is divided into forty-eight sections, devoted to various aspects of the isomorphism, as well as an appendix. Each paragraph is headed by a short description of the isomorphic items in their least common denomination. Paraphrases of the biblical and Homeric texts are given, highlighting common points. As the Hebrew text sometimes condenses several motifs together, in contrast to the more prolific Homeric text, I sometimes cite that text in different comparative contexts. Biblical citations in English are based on *The Jerusalem Bible*.[4] This translation is modified and occasionally improved, so as *not to alter the basic literal meaning* of the Hebrew, yet adjusting it better to my purposes, and at times highlighting some particular point. The English of Homer's *Odyssey* is based on A. T. Murrey's translation, revised by G. E.

3. After the writing of this chapter was almost finished, it was pointed out by one of the editors that some essential observations on the isomorphism between Gen. 24 and Homer's *Odyssey* 6–13 (made here) had already been discussed, albeit briefly, by Thomas L. Brodie, *Genesis as a Dialogue: A Literary, Historical and Theological Commentary* (Oxford University Press, 2001), 464–5, and also by Bruce Louden, *Homer's* Odyssey *and the Near East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 136–43. Since the present study is completely independent of Brodie's and Louden's, it is reassuring (and delightful) that the same observations were made in three *independent* researches, which clearly strengthens the significance of these observations and the gravity of their conclusions. The author thanks Philippe Wajdenbaum for bringing Brodie's and Louden's discussion to his notice.
4. Alexander Jones (ed.), *The Jerusalem Bible* (New York: Doubleday, Darton, Longman & Todd, 1966).

Dimock, in the Loeb Classical Library.[5] I offer a variant English vocalization of biblical personal names, such as Betu-el/Bito-el, Milcah/Malcah, Abraham/Avraham and Rebecca/Rivka. The names become thereby appellative – as are many names in Homer.

(1) *General paraphrase.* Genesis 24: Avraham gives his servant an order to go to Aram Na'haraim to find a bride for Isaac. Avraham strongly emphasizes that Isaac is *not* to leave Canaan to marry the girl; he must stay in his home country (Canaan). His servant arrives in 'Nachor's city' in the evening, stops on the outskirts of the city, and kneels his camels near the watering place where the city girls go down to draw water. The servant addresses Yahweh by a heavenly inspiration, saying to himself that the (first) girl who will tip her pitcher for him will be the chosen one for Isaac. Immediately, Rivka shows up before him, 'with a pitcher on her shoulder' (Gen. 24:15). He asks her for a drink of water, and she pours the water from the pitcher, watering his camels as well while he looks at her with admiration. Fulfilling the *heavenly plot*, Rivka directs him to her father's house, where he is received with great hospitality by her family, having a good meal with them after telling his hosts of his recent adventures. His wish to return to his home country (taking Rivka as a bride for Isaac) is approved by the family. Urging his hosts to let him return, his wish is approved and he is allowed to go back immediately (with her) to Canaan. The story closes in the wilderness (*sade*) of the Negev, where Rivka meets her bridegroom Isaac.

Odyssey 6ff.: Odysseus arrives, after much trouble on the sea, to a river mouth on the outskirts of the city of the Phaeacians, where girls would go to bathe and wash their clothes. He falls asleep in the wilderness there and, by a *heavenly plot* of the goddess Athena, he wakes up to the loud cries of the city girls who went down to the river with their mistress Nausicaa to bathe and wash their clothes (*Od*. 6.85). Being completely helpless and even naked, Odysseus, admiring Nausicaa's looks, asks for her pity and help. She responds with pity, giving him clothes, and directs him to her city, promising him that he will be received with great hospitality in her father's house. He arrives at her father's house, where he is received with great hospitality. He has a good meal with Nausicaa's family, relating his recent adventures. His wish to go back to Ithaca, his home country, is not approved before the possibility of Nausicaa becoming Odysseus' bride is raised by Nausicaa's father Alcinous, on the condition that Odysseus consent to remain with him in the country. The potential marriage, however, is not realized, as Odysseus does not consent to stay in Nausicaa's country; rather, he urges his hosts to let him return to his home. Nevertheless, there is a strong atmosphere of unrealized, 'platonic' love and mutual admiration between Nausicaa and Odysseus throughout the Homeric narrative. Contrary to his hosts' wishes that he stay, Odysseus strongly urges them to let him return to his home country immediately. Odysseus' wish to return is finally approved by Nausicaa's family, and they help him make a smooth and swift return trip to

5. Homer, *Odyssey*, Loeb Classical Library 104 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2nd edn 1995, reprinted 1998).

Ithaca. In his home country (*patrida*), Ithaca (*Od*. 13.119), he meets his beloved family (his wife Penelope, his son Telemachus, and others).

The general outline of both narratives is similar: a stranger arrives at the outskirts of a city, stopping near the watering place where the city girls would go down regularly for their domestic water needs. By a *heavenly plot*, the first girl whom he meets helps him immediately. The girl invites/directs him to her father's house in the city. The stranger goes to the father's house, where he is received with great hospitality by her family, having a good meal with them and telling his generous hosts of his recent adventures. The possibility is raised that he will take the girl for (resp. for his master's son) a wife. He urges his hosts to let him return to his land. His wish is approved and he is allowed to go back to his homeland. In both narratives, there is a marked emphasis that the potential one whom the girl marries (Odysseus [resp. Isaac]) must return (resp. stay) to (resp. in) his home country, Ithaca (resp. Canaan). In both narratives, somebody is waiting for the stranger in the homeland. Odysseus (already married to Penelope) goes back to his homeland without Nausicaa, whereas, in the biblical isomorph, we find the girl (Rivka) going with the man to his homeland, to marry Isaac there.

The S.G.W.FH.B (abbreviation of 'Stranger-Girl-Water place-Father's House-Bridegroom') motif grouping – common to both texts – seriously supports a claim for dependency. This functions as a leitmotif, common to both *Odyssey* 6–13 and Genesis 24, which also *partially* appears in *Odyssey* 10.105–11 (a similar story-episode of Odysseus in Laestrygonia, in which he, however, does not go to the father's house. Nor is the possibility of becoming the girl's bridegroom raised at all). This group of motifs, called hereafter the S.G.W.FH.B-motif group, does appear twice more in the Pentateuch (Gen. 29:9-30; Exod. 2:15-22). The appendix explains that these are modelled on Homer's *Odyssey* 6–13 *as well*. My claim that the biblical narratives depend on Homer lies in the five-fold nature of their common leitmotif, and in the pure 'statistical' intuition that such a detailed construct of motifs cannot be due to mere chance, especially if it is common to two of the most important ancient literary works, but doesn't appear in any other.

(2) *'Fingerprint': the pitcher on the shoulder* When Avraham's servant finished his vow, 'Rivka came out. She had a *pitcher* (*kad*) *on her shoulder*. The girl was very beautiful and a *virgin* [*bethula*]' (Gen. 24:15-16).[6] Similarly, when Odysseus 'was about to enter the lovely city, the goddess Athena met him in the guise of a *virgin maiden* [*parthenos*] *carrying a pitcher*' (*Od*. 7.19–20).[7] This

6. Italicizations in biblical and Homeric citations are all the present author's emphases.

7. Hebrew *bethula* seems borrowed from Greek *parthenos* (same meaning), with metathesis and the following standard consonant shifts: p/b and r/l. This Greek loan in ancient Hebrew could have originated before the Hellenistic era; Greek influence throughout the Near East is well attested long before the Persian era (i.e. before 530 BCE). Hebrew *kad* (pitcher) is clearly related to Greek *kados* (same meaning). The question of who borrowed from whom will not be discussed here, though it is claimed to be a Semitic

twofold parallelism of a *virgin* with a *pitcher*, coming to meet the stranger, was noticed in the mid-seventeenth century.[8]

(3) *The girl is a virgin* Nausicaa is described several times as a virgin (*parthenos*) (*Od*. 6.33, 6.109, 6.228, 6.237). Rivka is also described as a virgin (*bethula* in Gen. 24:16). The significance of this parallelism is marked by the fact that no other girl in the Hebrew Bible is so described– not even Rachel (Gen. 29:9).

(4) *Insistence on the girl's chastity*[9] Naussicaa is afraid of being seen with Odysseus in the city, lest she become blemished (*Od.* 6.279–81), saying about her kinsfolk: 'so will they say and this would become a reproach for me. I too, would blame another maiden who should do likewise, *and consort with a man before the day of public marriage*' (6.285–8). This statement implies that Nausicaa was *untouched* by any man until her meeting with Odysseus. Nausicaa's chastity is also marked by the fact that two of her handmaidens sleep with her (*Od*. 6.18–19), a detail that clearly emphasizes chastity. The biblical isomorph is equally clear: 'the girl [*ne'ara*] [Rivka] was … a virgin; *no man had touched her*' (Gen. 24:16).[10]

(5) *The girl is good-looking, beautiful* Homer repeatedly describes Nausicaa's beauty, especially in Odysseus' eyes. She is 'like the immortal goddesses *in form and look*' (6.16); her handmaids are '*gifted with beauty* by the graces' (6.18); her suitors are 'the noblest of all Phaeacians' (6.34–5); she is 'white armed' (6.101) 'like Artemis' (6.102); she is easy to recognize amid her maidens: 'although all are *beautiful* – so amid her handmaids *shone* the unwed maid [Nausicaa]' (6.108–9); she is a '*fair-faced* maiden' (6.142, 6.113 and 7.301). Odysseus likens her to Artemis 'in stature and form' (6.151–2); when she enters the dance, she is 'a *flower so fair*' (6.157). Odysseus says to her: 'never yet have my eyes looked upon a mortal such as you, whether a man or a woman; awe holds me as I look on you' (6.160–161); she is likened to 'the shoot palm near the altar in Delos' (6.163–4), marvelled at by Odysseus (6.166); he says to her: 'I marvel at you and am amazed and fear greatly to touch your feet' (6.168–9); her maidens are 'fair-tressed' (6.222). Among the Phaeacians, she has 'wooers many and noble' (6.284); her brothers are 'men like immortals' (7.5). One of Nausicaa's

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loan in Greek, and not vice versa. See Émilia Masson, *Recherches sur les plus anciens emprunts sémitiques en grec* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1967).

8. Zacharias Bogan, *Homerus Hebraizon*, *sive, comparatio Homeri cum scriptoribus sacris quod normam loquendi* (Oxford, 1658), who explains the close similarities as a sign that both texts were written by a 'heavenly inspiration'.
9. She is not touched by any man, *in addition* to being described as a virgin.
10. Hebrew *ne'ara* (girl) (Gen. 24:16) is loaned from Greek *nearos* (youngster, boy), fem. *neara*, pl. *nearoi* (cf. Hom. *Il*. 2.289). Assurance that the loan is from Greek to Hebrew (and not vice versa) is the fact that the Greek has an Indo-European root (*nea*, new), while there is no Hebrew root. In fact, *ne'ara* (masc. *na'ar*) is unattested in any other Semitic language.

grandmothers, Periboea, was 'the best in looks of women' (7.57); Nausicaa is again 'looking like a goddess' (7.291); Odysseus will pray to her 'like to a god' (8.467). Nausicaa has '*the beauty of the gods*' (*theōn apo … kallos*) (*Od*. 8.457).

The biblical isomorph is brief. On the first encounter between Avraham's servant and Rivka, 'the girl was *very beautiful* and a virgin' (24:16). Rivka's beauty is referred to also when Isaac says: 'she is my sister, since he was afraid to say she is my wife lest the people here will kill me because of Rivka because *she is good-looking*' (Gen. 26:7). Note also that Rachel, Lavan's daughter – that is, Rivka's niece – is 'nice in shape and good-looking' (Gen. 29:17). This, we will see, is an 'after-effect' of Rivka's beauty in Genesis 24:16.

(6) *The stranger urges his hosts to send him without delay back to his home country* Avraham's servant says to Rivka's mother and brother: 'send me to my master … *do not delay me* … let me be sent' (Gen. 24:54-6). Similarly, Odysseus persistently '*urges* that he be sent' (*Od*. 8.30) by his hosts without delay to his homeland. He also says to his hosts: '*make haste* … that you may let me … [return to] the soil of my land … my possessions, my slaves, my great high roofed house' (*Od*. 7.222–4). These verses (222–4) are the ultimate source of Genesis 24:54–6, cited above. The 'Fingerprint', '*do not delay me*' (Gen. 24:56), has the variants '*make haste*' (*Od*. 7.222) and 'they all praised his words and *urged sending* the stranger' (*Od*. 13.47–8).

(7) *The host promises to send the guest, mentioning the divine will, and a possible match for his daughter, while the guest praises his own god* Avraham's servant's hosts say to him: '"Rivka is there before you. *Take her and go* and let her become the wife of your master's son, as *Yahweh has decreed*." Hearing this, Avraham's servant prostrated himself on the ground before *Yahweh*' (vs. Gen. 24:51-2). Similarly, Odysseus' host (Nausicaa's father, Alcinous) says to Odysseus: 'I would, father *Zeus*, *Athena*, *Apollo*, that *you … would have my daughter to wife* … if you should choose to remain, but against your will … no one will keep you, may such a thing never please father *Zeus*' (*Od*. 7.310–17). He adds promises to send Odysseus back, and, hearing this, Odysseus prays: '*Father Zeus*, grant that Alcinous may bring to pass all what he said' (7.330–31).

(8) *The stranger is sent back to his homeland by the girl's relatives, emphasizing her brother's and mother's involvement* Rivka's consent is asked by her brother and mother (Gen. 24:55–7) and she gives it (24:58). 'And they *sent* Rivka their sister with her wet nurse and Avraham's servant with his men' (Gen. 24:59). This short verse stands as an isomorph of the long description of how Odysseus is sent back to his home country by Nausicaa's family in *Odyssey* 8ff. Nausicaa's father summons the Phaeacians to a farewell feast (*Od*. 8.25ff.). After the feast, with songs and athletic games, the twelve Phaeacian presidents are sent to bring farewell presents for Odysseus (*Od*. 8.390ff.). When the farewell presents are brought, they: 'were received by Alcinous' sons [i.e. Nausicaa's brothers] … to be placed before their venerable mother [i.e. Nausicaa's mother]' (*Od*. 8.419–20). Here we encounter Nausicaa's brothers and mother explicitly involved

in Odysseus' departure, much as Rivka's brother and mother are involved in Avraham's servant's departure (Gen. 24:55-9). Before departing, Odysseus narrates a series of fantastic stories of his adventures, beginning with his encounter with the Cyclops (*Od*. 10–12). Odysseus' departure is described in 13.1–187, with the active involvement of Nausicaa's father (13.3ff.) and mother (13.66ff.).

(9) *Anti-isomorphism: presents of gold and clothes given by hosts (resp. guest)* The presents of bronze, gold and cloths arranged for Odysseus by Nausicaa's brothers and mother before his departure (*Od*. 8. 419–20) stands as an *anti-isomorph* with the presents of silver, gold and cloths given by Avraham's servant to Rivka in Genesis 24:53, before his departure back to Canaan. Anti-isomorphs are no less significant than isomorphs. In *Odyssey* 5.38, Odysseus is to receive 'stores of *bronze* and *gold* and *clothing* [*estētha*]'. This 'foresight' is fulfilled in *Odyssey* 8.392, when the twelve presidents of the twelve Phaeacian tribes are ordered by king Alcinous to bring Odysseus 'a newly washed *cloak and tunic* [*chitōna*] and a talent of precious *gold*'. Each president sends a herald to bring the presents to Alcinous' house and to be received by Alcinous' 'flawless sons and they set them [these gifts] before their revered mother' (*Od*. 8.419–20). Alcinous asks his wife Arête to bring 'a handsome chest, the best you have and place in it a newly washed cloak and tunic' (8.424–5). Accordingly, 'Arête brought forth for the stranger a beautiful chest from the treasure chamber and placed in it the handsome gifts the *clothes* and the *gold* which the Phaeacians gave. And in it she herself placed a cloak and a beautiful tunic' (*Od*. 8.438–40; see also 13.10–11 and 13.128–39).

In the biblical *anti-isomorph*, before his departure for his home country, Avraham's servant gives Rivka: '*silver and gold* ornaments and *clothes*, and he gave cakes [*migdanot*] to her brothers and mother' (Gen. 24:53). Note that the gifts of Avraham's servant to Rivka consist of *silver* and *gold* and *clothes*, which stand in striking correspondence with the gifts of *bronze* and *gold* and *cloths* Odysseus received from his hosts, whereas the gifts for her family are … cakes – that is, cheap gifts. Avraham's servant appears cunning and tricky, as he well knows that his gifts to Rivka will go with her … back to Canaan; that is, to her bridegroom's family! This cunning corresponds well to the trickster role of Odysseus, so well attested throughout the *Odyssey* (see e.g. *Od*. 9.414, 9.422, 13.416, 14.31).

(10) *The stranger asks his god for future kindness and goodwill* Before entering the city, Odysseus prays to Athena: 'Grant that I may come to the Phaeacians (as one) to be *cherished and pitied*' (6.323–7). The biblical isomorph is in the twofold prayers of Avraham's servant, before entering the city: 'Yahweh, god of my master Avraham, be with me today and show *your kindness* to my master Avraham' (Gen. 24:12), and: 'by this I shall know you have shown your *kindness* to my master' (24:14). Also, after Rivka's invitation to her father's house, he prays: 'blessed be Yahweh, god of my master Avraham, for he has not stopped showing *kindness and goodness* to my master' (24:27). Note that the exact same expression, 'kindness and goodness', is used by Avraham's servant when he

speaks to Lavan and Betu-el: 'tell me whether you are prepared to show *kindness and goodness* to my master' (24:49). This is significant, as the kindness and goodness are given by humans as in Odysseus' prayer for the kindness of the Phaeacians.

(11) *God's/gods' central role throughout human affairs* Both biblical and Homeric texts are immersed with divine intervention in human affairs. The biblical text, however, always mentions One God (Yahweh), whereas the *Odyssey* mentions several (Zeus, Athena, and others). The Bible consistently unifies the Greek gods with Yahweh.

(12) *The stranger's amazement/marvel at the girl as well as his silence* 'She [Rivka] quickly emptied her pitcher, while the man *marvelled* at her (*mishta'eh*) and kept *silence* to see whether Yahweh had made his journey successful' (Gen. 24:20-21).

A similar motif of Odysseus marvelling upon seeing Nausicaa appears several times in the Greek text. At their first meeting, Odysseus compares his marvel (*thumō*, *Od*. 6.166) at seeing the palm tree near Apollo's altar in Delos to the marvel he feels in gazing on Nausicaa: 'In like manner, lady, I *marvel* at you and am *amazed* [*agamai te tehēpa*], and fear greatly to touch your knees' (*Od*. 6.168–9). The marvel is mutual. When Odysseus bathed, 'Gleaming with beauty and grace, the maiden [Nausicaa] *marvelled* [*thēieto*] at him' (*Od*. 6.237). And again, after another bath, 'she [Nausicaa] *marvelled* [*thaumazein*] at Odysseus' (8.459). She is also amazed (*epethuma*) because of her dream in which Athena tells her of the approaching day of marriage (6.49), a partial realization of which is her soon-to-come meeting with Odysseus. He in turn marvelled upon seeing all sights of Phaeacia (Nausicaa's home city) (7.43 *thaumazein*, and 7.133 *thēsato*), and the Phaeacian men marvelled (*thaumazon*) upon seeing him. He also marvelled (*thaumae*) at the dancing boys (8.265) and again marvelled (8.384) at seeing Nausicaa's brothers dancing (8.370ff.). Odysseus is asked to keep *silent* (*sigē Od*. 7.30) when following Athena into the city (*Od*. 7.30 and 7.43, 8.265, 8.384, as well as in Gen. 24:20-21).

(13) *Special hand gesture: under someone's thigh/grasping the knees* Avraham asks his servant: 'place your hand under my thigh' (Gen. 24:2; see also 47:29). A similar gesture of grasping the knees is common in the *Odyssey*; for instance, Odysseus feared greatly to touch Nausicaa's knees (6.169). He touches Arête's (Nausicaa's mother) knees (6.315 and elsewhere). Zipora touches Yahweh's leg in supplication when he is about to kill her husband Moses (Exod. 4:25).

(14) *Finding a mate in another country: locals despised* The Phaeacians would gossip upon seeing Nausicaa going around with Odysseus: 'she must have brought some storm-tossed fellow … a distant *foreigner* … and she will have him as her husband all her days, better so even if she has gone off and found [*eurēn*] a husband from *another people* [*allothēn*] for truly she *scorns* the Phaeacians *here in the land* where she has wooers many and noble' (*Od*.

6.276–84). The biblical isomorph is the marked *contempt* of Avraham for the local Canaanite girls asking for Isaac's wife to be taken from his own native land and kinsfolk, and not from the local stock of Canaanite girls: 'I would have you swear by Yahweh, … that you *will not choose a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites … among whom I live*' (Gen. 24:3-4). Here, the despised Canaanites' potential brides for Isaac are the biblical isomorph of the despised Phaeacian's potential bridegrooms of Nausicaa. Another parallel is that the girl should go (goes) to *another* land to find a mate. The Phaeacian youth say of Nausicaa (in her fancies): 'better so even if she has gone off and found [*eurēn*] a husband from *another people* [*allothēn*]' (*Od*. 6.283–4). The biblical isomorph is, more simply, that Rivka goes to Canaan to marry Isaac.

(15) *The girl tells her parents what she dreamed/saw, and a potential marriage* After Nausicaa saw Athena (urging her to marry) in a dream, she goes on to tell the dream of marriage to her parents: 'Nausicaa … wondering at her dream, went through the house *to tell her parents*, her staunch father and her mother' (*Od*. 6.49ff.). A long description is given about how she finds them and describes to them what she dreamt about. The biblical isomorph is short: 'The girl [Rivka] ran to her mother's house *to tell what had happened*' (Gen. 24:28).

(16) *Mention of the bride's wet nurse* Apeire, Nausicaa's woman in waiting (*thalamēpolos* in *Od*. 7.8), is amply described in *Odyssey* 7.7–13. In fact, she is Nausicaa's wet nurse (*trephe*; Gr. *trephō* means to nourish [*Od*. 7.12]). The biblical isomorph of this is the mention of Rivka's wet nurse in Genesis 24:59. Note that the mention of the wet nurse to a grown-up maiden like Rivka, as accompanying her to the new land, is out of place in the biblical story, while in Nausicaa's case, her nurse Apeire is described at length as an integral part of Alcinous' house. Rivka's wet nurse is mentioned as a *formal* isomorph of Apeire, without having an organic role in the story. The meaning of *trephe* (*Od*. 7.12) is clear from *Odyssey* 19.481, where Odysseus says to Eurycleia: 'maia (mother) … you *nursed* me … at your *breast*' (*Od*. 19.482–3).

(17) *Mention of the girl's maidens* Rivka's maidens (*ne'arote'ha*, Gen. 24:61) are mentioned as following her to the land of Canaan. These maidens are the isomorph of Nausicaa's maidens in *Odyssey* 6.80ff. *Gunaixin* in 6.80 is translated 'maidens'. Also, *amphi-poloi* in verses 80, 84 and 109 is 'handmaidens'. See also *kouroun* in 6.122, or *kouresin*, 'maidens', in *Odyssey* 6.135. Again, Rivka's maidens have no organic role in Genesis 24, but are included merely as a formal isomorph to Nausicaa's maidens.

(18) *Mention of the girl's brother(s) by name(s) with no sister mentioned* According to *Odyssey* 6.63–5, Nausicaa had five brothers, two married and three unmarried. They are mentioned by Odysseus: 'Blessed be your father and … mother … and twice blessed *your brothers*' (*Od*. 6.153–4). When she arrived at her father's palace, 'she halted the mules at the outer gate and *her brothers* crowded about her, men like the immortals' (*Od*. 7.3–5). Her brother Laodamas

is mentioned in 7.170–71, sitting near their father, who loved him over all his brothers. Nausicaa's brothers are mentioned by name in 8.117–18: Laodamas, Halius and 'god-like Clytoneus'. They are good sportsmen, and Laodamas is mentioned as Odysseus' host in *Odyssey* 8.208. The 'sons of flawless Alcinous' (Nausicaa's brothers) are mentioned again in 8.419–90 as storing the gifts brought in by the people for Odysseus. Their biblical isomorph is Lavan: 'Rivka had a *brother called Lavan*' (Gen. 24:29). Avraham's servant offers gifts to Rivka's brother and to her mother (Gen. 24:54), and Rivka's brother and mother ask Avraham's servant to let Rivka stay ten days (Gen. 24:55), but 'they let their sister go' (24:59). The plural 'their', much as 'Lavan and his brothers' in Genesis 31:23, confirms that Rivka, like Nausicaa, had *several* brothers.

(19) *Mention of the girl's father's house* Nausicaa promises Odysseus: 'Prepare yourself … that I may set you on the way to *my father's house*' (*Od*. 6.256). The expression '*my father's house*' appears also in *Odyssey* 6.296, as well as in 6.299. Odysseus asks directions to this house (*Od*. 7.22–3), and Athena will show the house to him because Alcinous lives 'close to *the house of my father*' (*Od*. 7.28–9). The 'house of Alcinous' (7.82) is described at length (7.82ff.). The biblical isomorph is short, as Rivka is asked: 'is there room at *your father's house?*' (Gen. 24:23). Lavan, however, unbidden, answers: 'I cleared *the house*' (Gen. 24:31). The father's house is also called '*her mother's house*' (Gen. 24:28), an unconventional expression, to be explained in the following point.

(20) *Importance of the girl's mother – no less than her father* Nausicaa's mother, Queen Arête, is no less important and revered than her husband, King Alcinous. Nausicaa directs Odysseus to go first to her mother's sitting place (*Od*. 6.304ff.), for his destiny depends on her goodwill (6.310–15). Arête's noble lineage and importance are described in *Odyssey* 7.60ff.: the only daughter of Rhexenor, when he was struck by Apollo. Rhexenor's brother Alcinous:

> made her his wife and *honoured her as no other woman on earth is honoured*, of all those who in these days direct their households in subjection to their husbands, *so heartily she is honoured*, and has ever been, by her children and by Alcinous himself and by the people who look upon her as a goddess and greet her as she goes through the city. For she of herself is no way lacking in good understanding, and settled the quarrels of those to whom she has good will, even if they are men. (7.65–74)

She sits together with her husband Alcinous (7.141) and, when Odysseus approaches them, he 'threw his arms about the knees of Arête' (7.142–3) and made his prayer to her: 'Arête … to your husband and to you I came as a suppliant … grant me speedy conveyance' (7.146ff.). She asks him where he came from (7.237ff.), and he answers, calling her 'queen' (*basileian*, 7.241). She issues orders to give him a bed and blankets (7.335ff.). It is abundantly clear that Arête is honoured, like her husband, in both house and city. A mother's importance is reflected briefly in Genesis 24:28, where we are told that Rivka

'ran to *her mother's house*', which had just been called 'her father's house' (Gen. 24:23)! The mother's importance can be also discerned in Genesis 24:55, where Rivka's brother and *mother* ask Avraham's servant to stay with them longer. The presents of cakes (*migdanot*) that Avraham's servant gave after hearing that the girl is free to go with him are similarly given to 'her brother and *mother*' (Gen. 24:53).

(21) *Mention of the city and the city men* Avraham's servant goes on to Nachor's city (*iir Nachor*, Gen. 24:10), making the camels kneel at the outskirts to wait for 'the girls of the *men of the city*' (*bnot anshei ha'iir*, 24:13). Similarly, Nausicaa's father's (Alcinous) place of presidency (over the Phaeacians) is described as a city (*polis* in vs. 7.14, alternatively *aste* in vs. 7.2). The city and city men are mentioned and described throughout the epic. For instance, 'two strong mules bore the maidens to the *city* [*astu*]' in 7.2, and 'Odysseus roused himself to go to the *city* [*polin*]' (*Od*. 7.14), and 'great hearted Phaeacians meeting him [Odysseus]' – that is, the city men – are mentioned in 7.16. In 7.26, Odysseus says that he doesn't know 'any man of this city' (*anthropōn oi tēnde polin*), and in 6.2 and 6.114, we have the expression 'the city of the Phaeacian men' (*Phaikon andrōn polin*). These expressions may be the *ultimate* source of the peculiar biblical expression 'the daughters of the *men of the city*', in Genesis 24:13. The word 'men of' (*anshei*) is redundant, as the shorter expression 'the girls of the city' suffices. The Hebrew seems to have been distorted by the influence of '*anthropōn polin*' and '*andrōn polin*' of *Od*. 7.26 and 6.114.

(22) *Mention of the spring (well) where the city people would go to draw water* Avraham's servant made his camels kneel 'in the evening when girls go to draw water … outside the town near the well' (Gen. 24:11). He predicts to himself: 'I stand here by the spring as the *young women from the city come out to draw water*' (24:13). This is the biblical isomorph of the two springs in Alcinous' garden and house, one of which 'flows beneath the threshold of the court toward the high house *from which the city folk draw their water*' (*Od*. 7.129–31). The motif of a 'spring' (*krēnēn*) from which the city folk (*politai*) draw water (*hydreuonto*) appears also in *Od*. 17.205–6 and in 10.105–8.

(23) *Five related motifs: a stranger asks for help from the first girl of the city he encounters near the water place, everything under divine control* Odysseus came to a: 'seaward flowing *river*' (*Od*. 5.461); he 'found a spot *near the water*' (*Od*. 5.475) and went to sleep. Meanwhile, Nausicaa and her handmaids arrived at the river to wash their clothes and bathe (*Od*. 6.1–109). But when Nausicaa was about to return home (*oikande* in 6.110), 'flashing-eyed *Athena* had another thought that Odysseus might awake and see the fair-faced [*euōpida* 6.113; see also 7.301] maiden who would lead him to the city [*polin* 6.114] of the Phaeacian men' (6.110–14). Athena devises a trick: a tossed ball fell 'accidentally' into the river by which Odysseus slept, waking him at the cry of the handmaidens (*Od*. 6.117). He came among them, '*full of need*' (6.136): 'terrible he seemed to them … and they fled in fear' (6.138). 'Alone the daughter

of Alcinous [Nausicaa] kept her place, for in her heart *Athena* put courage … she stood and faced him' (6.139ff.). Odysseus thought to make a prayer, hoping that she 'might show him the way to the city *and give him clothes*' (6.144). He praises her beauty, mentioning *the gods* to whom his destination is due (6.174):

> it is to *you first* [*prōtēin* 6.176; see also 7.301] that I have come after many grievous toils and of the others who possess this city and land I know not one, show me the way to the city [*astu* in 6.178] and *give me some rag* [*rhakos* 6.178)] to throw about me. (6.175–9)

Nausicaa answers: 'stranger … Zeus … gives happy fortune to men … but now since you came to our city and land *you shall not lack clothing* … I will show you the way to the city [*astu* 6.194]' (6.186–95). She is the *first girl* Odysseus meets (also in Alcinous', words: *Od*. 7.301), and, giving him clothes and food, she tells him the way to her father's house (*Od*. 6.228, 6.248ff. and 6.255ff.).

This collection of motifs is easily discerned in the biblical isomorph. Avraham's servant predicts:

> '*Yahweh*, *god* of my master Avraham, *grant me a [lucky] hit today* [Gen. 24:12: (*ha'kreh na le'phanai ha'yom*].[11] Show your kindness to my master Avraham. Here I stand *by the spring* as the *young women of the men of the city come* out to draw water. And *the girl* [*ha'na'ara*] to whom I will say *please tip your pitcher and let me drink*, if she answers "drink, and I will water your camel too" may she be the one you have chosen for your servant Isaac; by this I will know you have shown your kindness to my master'; *he had not finished speaking when Rivka came out ... she went down to the spring*, filled her pitcher and came up again. *Running to meet her,* the servant said, '*Please give me a little water to drink* from your pitcher.' She replied, '*Drink my lord*' *and she quickly lowered her pitcher* … and gave him to drink. (Gen. 24:12-19)

Here, Rivka's supply of water to Avraham's servant is an isomorph to Nausicaa giving Odysseus clothes and food (*Od*. 6.228 and 6.248ff.). Avraham's servant's request to Rivka, 'Give me some water to drink', is isomorphic to Odysseus asking Nausicaa, 'give me some rag' (6.178). That Avraham's servant encounters Rivka as *the first* girl of the city he meets is also clear: 'While still not finished *speaking to my heart* [i.e. *to myself*], Rivka came out' (Gen. 24:45). This wording emphasizes the fact that Rivka is the *first girl* of the city Avraham's servant encounters, much as Odysseus encounters Nausicaa *first* (*protein* in *Od*. 6.176 and see also 7.301). Rivka waters the servant's camels too (24:20ff.); he asks her for a lodging place in the night and she directs him to her father's house.

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11. Hebrew *ha'kreh-na le'phanai* (Gen. 24:12) means 'grant me a *hit*' or 'grant me to *hit*'. Hebrew root *karah* means 'hit upon, light upon, encounter'. For instance, God '*hit* upon' or '*fell* upon' (*va'yikar Elohim*) Balaam (Num. 23:4). Note that Greek *kureō* is semantically the same, making it plausible that Hebrew *karah* is a loanword from this Greek verb.

Avraham's servant offers thanksgiving to Yahweh (24:27), corresponding to Odysseus' prayer to Athena in *Od*. 6.323–7.

(24) *Speaking to himself, the stranger foretells meeting with the girl* Seeing Nausicaa:

> Odysseus wondered whether he should clasp the knees of the fair-faced maiden and make his prayer, or whether, standing apart, he should beseech her with winning words in hope that *she might show him the way to the city and give him some clothes*. (*Od*. 6.141–5)

Speaking to himself, he foretells that the girl will show him the way to the city and give him clothes (*Od*. 6.192ff. and 255ff.). Similarly *speaking to himself*, Avraham's servant foretells that he will ask the girl to tip her pitcher (letting him drink) and that she will also water his camels (Gen. 24:13-14, 19-20). That Avraham's servant *speaks to himself* is clear also from his subsequent reflection: 'While still unfinished *speaking to my heart*, Rivka came out' (24:45).

(25) *Detailed retelling* After the meal, responding to Arête's standard 'Who are you?', Odysseus tells his hosts of his recent adventures, from his departure from Calypso's island to his meeting with Nausicaa (*Od*. 7.243–98). The biblical isomorph is a similarly detailed description of the recent adventures Avraham's servant gives to his hosts: from his departure from Avraham, to his meeting with Rivka (Gen. 24:34-49). As in Odysseus' detailed retelling, Avraham's servant retells his recent adventures in detail, indicating that the biblical author wished to remain true to his Homeric model. This is a *unique* and significant motif, common to both *Odyssey* 6–13 and Genesis 24. Such detailed retelling is rare in the whole of Greek literature (we have it in Hom. *Il*. 2.55ff.) and is *unique* to the Bible.

(26) *The guest exposes his identity with name and home country* When first asked by queen Arête: 'Stranger … who are you among men and from where?' (*Od*. 7.238ff.), Odysseus prefers not to expose his identity to her. Instead he reports on his recent adventures and sufferings, without giving any hint of who he is or his whereabouts. But then Alcinous asks him a similar question:

> Tell me the name by which they called you at home … for there is no one of all mankind who is nameless … parents bestow names on all when they give them birth. And tell me your country, your people and your city. (*Od*. 8.550–55)

Odysseus now answers in detail: 'First now will I tell my name that you know all of it … *I am Odysseus*, son of Laertes, known to all men for my stratagems, and my fame reaches heaven. I dwell in clear seen Ithaca' (*Od*. 9.16–21). He goes on to speak lengthily about his home country and about what happened after his return from Troy with his comrades (*Od*. 9–12). The biblical isomorph

is the reference to identity and origin: '*I am Avraham's servant*' (Gen. 24:34), continuing with reference to Avraham's riches, and his own mission to find a girl for Avraham's son 'not from the daughters of the Canaanites *in whose country I live*' (Gen. 24:37), implicitly exposing his home country Canaan, in a manner corresponding to Odysseus' exposure of his country.

(27) *The girl introduces herself with the formula: 'I am the daughter of …'* Nausicaa says to Odysseus upon their encounter:

> I will show you the way to the city and will tell you the name of the people, the Phaeacians possess this city and land and *I am the daughter of great hearted Alcinous* in whom are vested the power and the might of the Phaeacians.
> (*Od*. 6.194–7)

This is isomorphic to Rivka's words to Avraham's servant: '*I am the daughter of Bito-el* [*contra* Masoretic pronunciation Betu-el, see section 47 below], the son whom Milcah [pronounce: Malcah] bore to Nachor' (Gen. 24:25).

(28) *Similar background of the meeting scene between the (potential) bride-groom and the (potential) bride in the wilderness* Odysseus arrives after having a hard time on the sea to a 'fair-flowing river, where seemed to him the best place … there was shelter' (*Od*. 5.441ff.). 'There he crept beneath two bushes' (5.476), and there, 'far in the *wilderness*' (*agru ep eschatiēs*, *Od*. 5.489), exhausted from weariness, he went to sleep (5.493). This remote place in the *wilderness* is to be the meeting place of Odysseus and Nausicaa, when he is awakened by the cry of Nausicaa's handmaids (6.117ff., discussed in section 23 above). That the meeting place was far from the city – in the wilderness – is also clear from the fact that Nausicaa and her maids go there on a mule-driven wagon (6.68 ff.). The biblical isomorph is Isaac's first encounter with Rivka in the *wilderness*:

> Now Isaac went out [*va'yetze*] to calm down [*la'suach*][12] in the *wilderness* [*ba'sadē*], as evening fell. Looking up, he saw camels approaching. And Rivka looked up and saw Isaac. She jumped down from her camel and asked the servant, 'Who is that man walking through the *wilderness* to meet us?' The servant replied, 'That is my master'; then she took her veil and hid her face.
> (Gen. 24:63-5)

(29) *Gifts of wooing* Odysseus says to Nausicaa: 'blessed in heart above all others who shall prevail with his *gifts of wooing* [*eednoisi*, *Od*. 6.159] and lead you to his home' (*Od*. 6.158–60). This is reflected in Avraham's servant's response to Rivka's generosity: 'the man took a *gold ring weighing half a shekel and put it through her nostrils, and put on her arms two bracelets weighing ten*

12. The Hebrew root *su'ach*, 'calm down' (Gen. 24:63), is clearly loaned from '*hesuchos*', 'calm, quiet'.

gold shekels' (Gen. 24:22). When Rivka's mother and brother agree to let him go with her to Canaan, the servant gives Rivka additional presents (Gen. 24:53).

(30) *Food is plentiful in the house* Nausicaa promises Odysseus that he will be received with great hospitality in her city and her father's house: 'you shall not lack clothing nor anything also of those things that befits a sore tried suppliant [*talapeiron*] when he appears' (*Od*. 6.192–3). She gives him 'food and drink' (6.209), and invites him to her father's house, where 'the leaders of the Phaeacians … sit drinking and eating for they lived in *unfailing abundance*' (7.98–9). Such abundance is described again in 7.102–28, and 'the revered housekeeper brought and set before him bread and with it dainties *in abundance*' (7.175–7). All drink wine (7.183–4), and a great offering of 'choice victims' (*hiera kala*) (7.192) is planned for the next day, 'to entertain the stranger' (7.190), with 'glorious hecatombs' (7.202). A great feast takes place: 'twelve sheep and eight white-tusked boars and two oxen of shambling gait' (8.59–61), a 'tempting feast' (8.61), 'until they had put from them the desire for food and drink' (8.72 also 8.473ff.). The biblical isomorph is brief: Rivka invites Avraham's servant to her father's house: '*we have plenty of straw and fodder*' (Gen. 24:25).

(31) *Room to sleep is spacious* Odysseus is received in Alcinous' house. Arête orders her servants to prepare a bed for him. 'There he *slept* … on the corded bedstead under the *echoing portico*' (*Od*. 7.335–45). Alcinous' house is spacious (7.82–5), 'well built' (7.88; 7.82–95), with fifty slave women (7.103). The biblical isomorph is again brief: 'we have *plenty* of straw and fodder, *and room to sleep*' (Gen. 24:25).

(32) *Generous hospitality – a cluster of six motifs* This isomorph is uncharacteristically based on verses 20ff. of Book 4 (rather than Books 6ff.) of Homer's *Odyssey*. Lavan 'went to the man and found him *still standing* by the camels. *Come in blessed of Yahweh, why stay out here* when I cleared the house and made room for the camels' (Gen. 24:31). From the subsequent verse, it follows that the servant had companions with him, perhaps patterned on Odysseus' son, Telemachus, and his companion, Peisistratus, coming to Menelaus' house in *Odyssey* 4.20ff. They '*halted at the gateway of the house*' (*Od*. 4.20; compare: 'why stay out here' Gen. 24:31). The servant Eteoneus informs Menelaus of the guests outside, who 'are *like seeds of great Zeus*' (*Od*. 4.24; compare: 'blessed of Yahweh' Gen. 24:31). Menelaus orders the servant to let the people come into the house (*Od*. 4.31–6). 'The man *entered the house*, and Lavan *loosened* [*va'yephatach*] the *camels,* providing *straw and fodder* for them and *water to wash* his legs and the legs of the people who were with him' (Gen. 24:32). The same motifs appear when Telemachus and his companion are received in Menelaus' house. Eteoneus called the other servant (*therapontas Od*. 4.38) and together:

> They *loosened* [*lusan*, l.c. 4.39] the sweating *horses* from beneath the yoke and flung before them *spelt* and mixed it with *white barley* … and *led the men into the divine house* [*domon*, 4.43] … and then [the guests] went into the *polished baths and bathed*. (*Od*. 4.39–49)

(33) *Four common expressions*

- Eating and drinking: 'The much enduring Odysseus *drank and ate*' (7.177). The biblical isomorph is '*they ate and drank* he and his companions' (Gen. 24:54).
- Serving: 'The revered housekeeper brought and *set before* [Odysseus] [*par-etheke*] *bread*' (*Od*. 7.175), and, in Genesis, 'He *set before him* [*va'yasem le'phanav*] *food*' (Gen. 24:33).
- Sleeping: They prepared the bed and called him: 'stranger, *go to sleep* [*epe-essin* 7.341] … and welcome it seemed to him *to lie down to sleep*, *so there he slept* … [also] *Alcinous lay down* [*lechos* 7.347] … and *beside him his wife*' (*Od*. 7.340–7). In Genesis, we find so briefly: '*and they went to sleep* [*va'yalinou*]' (Gen. 24:54).[13]
- Awakening: 'As soon as *early dawn* [*Hōs*] appeared, the rosy fingered, the divine might of Alcinous *rose* [*ōrnot*, impf. med. of *ornumi*, rise up] from his couch and *rose up* [*ōrto*] also Zeus-born Odysseus' (*Od*. 8.1–3). The biblical isomorph is: '*next morning they rose up* [*va'yakumu*]' (Gen. 24:54).

Rising up in the morning is a *banal* detail, which the biblical author usually omits, unless again remaining true to his Homeric model. When the prophetess Deborah chants '*ouri ouri* Deborah, *ouri ouri* da'beri shir', meaning 'rise up, rise up Deborah, rise up, rise up (and) pronounce a song' (Judg. 5:12), it seems to be borrowed from *ornumi*, 'rise up, wake up'.[14]

(34) *Brother(s) releasing the animals* When Nausicaa arrived at the palace, 'her brothers crowded about her … and *loosened the mules* [*hēmionus eluon*]' (*Od*. 7.4–6). The biblical isomorph is: 'and Lavan [Rivka's brother] *loosened* the camels [*va'yephteach ha'gmalim*]' (Gen. 24:32).

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13. Note that this detail of going to sleep is in a 'fairy tale' style, 'un-biblical' in its banality. When the Bible mentions somebody going to sleep, it is usually for a special (usually theological) purpose, as in Gen. 2:21, where God made Adam sleep in order to create the woman, or Gen. 28:21, where Jacob went to sleep in order to have a glorious dream in which God spoke to him. Never do we read in the Bible about a 'natural' (rather than divinely induced) sleep, except for in Gen. 24:54. It is the 'un-biblical' *banality* of this detail which marks it as significant. The biblical author remains true to his Homeric model.
14. For a detailed isomorphism between the prophetess Deborah (Judg. 4–5) and the Delphic prophetess Pythia, see Yaakov S. Kupitz & Katell Berthelot, 'Deborah and the Delphic Pythia', *Images and Prophecy in the Ancient Eastern Mediterranean*, M. Nissinen & C. E. Carter (eds) (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009), 95–122.

(35) *Lavan as an isomorph of Laodamas* Laodamas is Nausicaa's brother, while Lavan is Rivka's. Laodamas is Odysseus' primary host (*xeinos*): 'He [Laodamas] is *my host* and who would quarrel with one that entertains him? Foolish is the man and worthless, who challenges … the *host* [*xeinodokō*] who *receives him* in a strange land' (*Od*. 8.207–11). The biblical isomorph is:

> and Lavan ran out to the man … he said to him, 'Come in; why stay out? I have cleared the house and made room for the camels.' The man went to the house, while Lavan loosened the camels, providing straw and fodder for the camels and water for him and his companions to bathe their legs. He offered him food. (Gen. 24:30-33)

Laodamas '*sat next to him* [his father Alcinous] and was his best beloved' (*Od*. 7.170–71). In the biblical isomorph, Lavan sits near his father: 'Lavan *and* Betu-el replied: "this is from Yahweh"' (Gen. 24:50). Lavan is the only brother of Rivka who is mentioned by name. (Lavan is also isomorphic to Laomedon in that he made Apollo tend his cattle without pay [*Il*. 21.443–57], as Jacob tended Lavan's flocks without pay [Gen. 31:41-2]).

(36) *Genealogy of the girl* The detailed genealogy of Nausicaa of several generations is given (*Od*. 7.54–66). Rivka's genealogy, also running several generations back, is given (Gen. 24:15 and 24:24; see below).

(37) *Genealogical isomorphism* Nausicaa's divine, royal genealogy is given (*Od*. 7.54–66):

> First Nausithous was born from the earth-shaker Poseidon and Periboea … youngest daughter of great-hearted Eurymedon who once was king of the insolent giants … Poseidon lay with Periboea and begot a son … Nausithous who ruled over the Phaeacians and Nausithous begot Rhexenor and Alcinous. Rhexenor … Apollo struck him down in his hall while yet a bridegroom and he left only one daughter, Arête, whom Alcinous made his wife.

Nausicaa's mother, Arête, is married to *her uncle (father's brother)* Alcinous, who is the brother of Arête's father, Rhexenor. She is honoured by her husband/uncle Alcinous, and by the people (*Od*. 7.67–77). She is called *basileian* ('queen': *Od*. 7.241), while her daughter is *basileia* ('queen', 'princess', *Od*. 6.115). In Rivka's genealogy, 'she was the daughter of Bito-el, son of Milcah, wife of Avraham's brother Nachor' (Gen. 24:15; also 24:24 and 11:29). Milcah is Haran's daughter (Gen. 11:29), Nachor and Avraham's brother (Gen. 11:26). Thus, Milcah, Rivka's grandmother, is married to *her uncle* Nachor! Note also the similarity between the names Nachor and Rhexenor – sharing three consonants.

(38) *Vitality* Nausicaa and her brothers, many Phaeacians, and Odysseus himself, are good athletes, especially in *running.* They are good-looking, skilled

dancers, excellent mariners, tall and strong. She is 'like the immortal goddesses in form and look' (*Od*. 6.16). Her brothers must have clean clothes 'to go to *dance*' (6.65). She sat on a wagon '… and there was a clatter of the mules as they *sped on swiftly*' (*Od*. 6.81ff.). Arriving at the river, she and her maidens are cleaning the clothes, '*busily vying* each with one another' (6.93).

> She and her handmaids threw off their headgears … *playing ball* and … Nausicaa was the leader in song. Like Artemis, she roves over the mountains along the ridges of lofty Taygetos … joying in the pursuit of boars and *swift deer* and the wood nymphs *share her sport ... high above them all* Artemis holds her head and brows … so amid her handmaids shove the unwed maiden. (*Od*. 6.99–109)

Nausicaa 'tossed the ball to one of her maids … [and] missed but threw it into a deep eddy' (6.115–16), so strong was her throw. She is again likened to Artemis 'in looks and in stature and in form' (6.152). Great is the joy of her relatives as they see her, 'entering the dance a flower so fair' (6.157). She is like the palm tree of Delos (6.162ff.). Many passages in *Odyssey* 6–13 reveal further vigour on the part of Nausicaa's brothers and kinsfolk, as well as of Odysseus. Such ubiquitous vigour and swiftness is well reflected in the biblical isomorph, with swift motion and running. Avraham's servant meets Rivka, '*running*. She *quickly* lowered her pitcher … "I will draw water for your camels too, until they have had enough." She *quickly* emptied her pitcher … and *ran* to the well again … and drew water *for all the camels*' (Gen. 24:17-20). Rivka is also strong, bringing water to fill the bellies of ten thirsty camels! She '*ran* to her mother's house to tell what happened. Lavan *ran* to the man at the spring' (24:28-9) and is active in hospitality (also Gen. 24:61-2). 'Rivka looked up and saw Isaac. She *jumped down* [*va'tipol*] from her camel' (Gen. 24:64). Also Lavan 'ran to the man' (Gen. 24:29) and 'he ran' (Gen. 29:13) to meet Jacob.

(39) *The number ten* Rivka's brothers and mother ask Avraham's servant, with his ten camels (Gen. 24:10), to let her stay with them ten days (Gen. 24:55). Ten days or years or members of a set is also a frequent motif in Homer. Phoenix stays with his family ten days (*Il*. 9.474); Odysseus' ship floats nine days on sea, reaching its destination on the tenth (*Od*. 9.83, 10.28–9, 12.446–7, 14.314); the Achaeans fought ten years at Troy (*Il*. 8.404–5). In *Odyssey* 19.484 and 21.208, Odysseus stayed twenty years (a pre-image for Jacob's twenty years away from his home country; Gen. 31:38, 31:41).

(40) *Host unsuccessfully bids the guest remain, while the guest wishes not to be delayed* Rivka's brother and mother ask: 'Let the girl stay with us [some] days or ten [days]' (Gen. 24:65), and he responds: '*Do not delay me here*' (24:66). Similarly Menelaus asks: 'Tarry in my halls until the eleventh or the twelfth [day] is come' (*Od*. 4.588), and Telamachus answers: '*Keep me not long here*' (4.594). This is an enduring motif, with Odysseus constantly asking his Phaeacian hosts not to delay his return trip (in books 7ff.).

(41) *The girl is led to the stranger's homeland* Odysseus says to Nausicaa: 'that man in his turn is blessed … who shall prevail with his gifts of wooing and *lead you to his home*' (*Od*. 6.158–9). The biblical isomorph is doubled 'Rivka and her servants stood up, mounted the camels and followed the man. The servant *took Rivka and departed*' (Gen. 24:61).

(42) *An angel or a god directs the way to the girl's city* Homer emphasizes that it was by god's will that Odysseus visited the land of the Phaeacians and returned to his homeland. When his wife, Penelope, longs and worries for Odysseus and her son Telemachus (*Od*. 4.813ff.), the phantom sent by Athena to calm her says: 'take her… *since such a guide goes with him* [*pompos am erchetai Od*. 4.825]' (*Od*. 4.825–8). Zeus tells Hermes:

> Seeing that you are … our *messenger* [*aggelos*, 5.29] declare to the … nymph [Calypso] our fixed resolve the return of … Odysseus … on a raft … he may come … to … the land of the Phaeacians … and [they] shall send him on a ship to his own native land. (5.29–37)

Hermes repeats this to Calypso (a 'mini-goddess'), who tells Odysseus to prepare a raft, while she instructs him how to drive it cleverly (5.270ff.), giving him also a fair wind (5.268). A storm caused by Poseidon's anger puts Odysseus in harm's way, 'but Athena had (the storm) cease and lulled to rest' (*Od*. 5.382ff.). Already in *Odyssey* 1.45–63 and 80–95, Athena speaks in favour of Odysseus' return to his land, saves him by giving him advice (5.426ff.) and gives him cleverness, so that he knows how to swim (5.437). Odysseus prays to the god of the rivers (5.441ff.), who stops the waves (5.451) so that Odysseus might sleep near the river's mouth.

Arriving in the land of the Phaeacians (*Od*. 6.2ff.), Athena goes to Alcinous' house: 'to continue the return of … Odysseus' (6.14). She appears to Nausicaa in a dream, making her go with her handmaids to wash their clothes and bathe near the place where Odysseus sleeps (6.41–2). Athena devises a trick to rouse Odysseus (6.112ff.), and later on, she intervenes again to beautify Odysseus in Nausicaa's eyes (6.233ff.).

Odysseus prays that he may find favour among the Phaeacians (6.325 ff.), and 'Athena heard him pray' (6.328). 'Athena, with kindly purpose, poured about him a thick mist' (7.14ff.). She appears to him in the guise of a maiden, holding a pitcher (7.19ff.). He asks: 'could you guide me [*hegēsas* 7.22] to the house of … Alcinous?' (7.22). 'Pallas Athena *led the way* [*hegēsato*] and he *followed the footsteps* of the goddess' (7.37). She instructs him to be brave and enter Alcinous' house, and pass through its halls to meet Arête. (7.78–9). Again, 'Athena … took the likeness of a herald … devising a return of Odysseus' (*Od*. 8.7ff.), and again, Athena beautifies Odysseus in order that he may find favour among the Phaeacians (8.18ff.).

She makes Odysseus' discus reach further than all others (8.193ff.), 'and Odysseus rejoiced that he had found *a true supporter*' (8.200). In his return home, Athena intervenes in his favour several times (*Od*. 13.188, 13.221).

Also, daemons are involved in Odysseus' return home, for example, in *Odyssey* 17.243: 'my master [Odysseus] may come back and *that some god* [*daimōn*] *may guide him* [*agagoi*]'. Also, in *Odyssey* 18.147, a *daemon* will bring Odysseus back home.

The biblical isomorph of this enduring motif is clear. Avraham tells his servant: 'Yahweh, god of heaven and god of earth … *he will send his angel* [*mal'a'ch*] *ahead of you* so that you may choose a wife for my son there' (Gen. 24:7). In thanksgiving, the servant says: '*Yahweh has guided my steps* to the house of my master's brother' (24:27). And again in his retold narrative, Avraham's servant reports this detail once more (24:40). '*Yahweh* … who had graciously *led me* to choose the daughter of my master's brother for his son' (24:48).

(43) *Female modest/erotic gesture* The gesture of a woman putting on/off her veil in front of a man is common in Homer's *Odyssey*. The formula 'holding before her face her shining veil [*krēdemna*, veil]' appears four times to describe Penelope's modesty in holding her veil before her suitors (*Od*. 1.334, 16.446, 18.210, 21.65). Calypso clothes herself in front of Odysseus, 'and on her head she placed a veil [*kaluptrēn*, woman's veil]' (*Od*. 5.232). The same holds for Circe: 'upon her head she set a veil [*kaluptrēn*]' (10.545). While Nausicaa's handmaids played with the ball, they (un-modestly) '*threw off their veils*' (*krēdemna*, veil) (*Od*. 6.100), clearly implying that Nausicaa had such a veil on her face as well when she went out with her handmaids to bathe in the river. When Nausicaa meets Odysseus, the Greek text reads '*stē d'anta schomenē*' (*Od*. 6.141), meaning literally: 'she stood before him *holding*' (*schomenē* means 'holding' from root *echō*), where the *object* held by her is not specified. Ancient readers of Homer understood *schomenē* here as 'holding' either her hands or her veil, at least, according to the scholiast.[15] This interpretation of Nausicaa as holding her veil before Odysseus is further supported because *schomenē* is shared with the formula of Penelope holding her *veil* before the suitors.[16] Given the frequency of the motif in the *Odyssey* in general, and with Nausicaa in her meeting with Odysseus in particular, we are hardly surprised to find it in the biblical tale: When Rivka saw her future husband approaching her in the wilderness, 'she took her *veil* and hid her face' (Gen. 24:65). We might add that this motif is very rare in the Bible, only appearing here and in Genesis 38:14-19, where Tamar puts her veil on and off when going to meet Yehuda, her dead husband's father.

(44) *Three interrelated motifs* Various passages of *Odyssey*, especially of books 1–2 and 17–20 (discussed below), lead us to the following picture: Odysseus' father, Laertes, was a very rich king. Odysseus was his *only* son, to whom

15. See A. Heubeck, S. West & J. B. Hainsworth, *A Commentary on Homer's* Odyssey, three volumes (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988).

16. According to Pausanias 3.20.10–11, Penelope veiled her face in front of Odysseus as a token of modesty when her father Icarius gave her to him. Hence the Image of Modesty was dedicated on spot.

Laertes bequeathed all his possessions and authority. Similarly, Odysseus was a very rich king over Ithaca, who hoped to leave his possessions and authority to his *only* son, Telemachus. This twice-repeated scheme also appears at the beginning of Avraham's servant's account of his adventures:

> Yahweh has overwhelmed my master with blessings and Avraham is now very rich. He has given him flocks and herds, silver and gold, men slaves and women slaves, camels and donkeys. Sarah, my master's wife, *bore him a son in his old age and he has made over all his property to him*. (Gen. 24:34-6)

This last element appears once again: 'and Avraham gave *all his possessions to Isaac*' (Gen. 25:4). That Isaac was Avraham's only son from his only lawful wife Sarah is well attested (see Gen. 17:15-16, 21:1-3 and 25.4ff.), and it is clear as well from Yahweh's words to Avraham: 'take your son (take) *your only* [*ye'chid'cha*], your beloved – Isaac and go the land of Moriah' (Gen. 22:2). Note that the biblical emphasis of Isaac's *uniqueness* as son is unparalleled in the Bible. Ishmael, who was born to his slave woman Hagar, is unlawful (Gen. 16:1ff.). For the motif of a slave woman having a son of her master after his lawful wife turns out to be barren (as Hagar gives birth to Ishmael after Sarah's barrenness), see *Odyssey* 4.10–14 (Helen, being unable to bear a child, allows a slave woman of her husband to give birth to his child).[17]

Both Odysseus and his son Telemachus are only sons. This is explicit in Telemachus' words:

> For such is the manner in which the son of Cronos (Zeus) has made our house run in a *single line* [*mounōse*, *Od*. 16.117]. As his *only son* [*mounon*, 16.118], did Arceisius beget Laertes, as his *only son* again [*mounon*, 16.119] did his father [Laertes] beget Odysseus, and Odysseus begot me [Telemachus] as his *only son* [*mounon*, 16.120)]. (*Od*. 16.117–20; see also 11.68)

As in Isaac's case, we have an explicit statement for his *uniqueness*. The *Odyssey* has also much evidence for the richness of the Laertes–Odysseus–Telemachus dynasty, with flocks, slaves, gold and bronze, expensive clothes and so on, to a degree which is evident for every reader acquainted with the Homeric epos. When Odysseus returns to his home (*Od*. books 17–20), we again have much evidence for the richness of the Laertes–Odysseus–Telemachus dynasty.

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17. Homer has a special term, Greek *nothos* ('bastard'), for a child of a slave woman (or a concubine), born to her master (*Il*. 2.727: *huios nothos*; see also *Il*. 11.102). A *nothos* had no legal right to inherit the possessions of his father – only the son of the *lawful* wife could inherit. The same law is clearly recognized in the case of Avraham's concubines' sons: 'And Avraham *gave all his possessions to Isaac*: And to Avraham's concubines' [Hebrew *pilgashim* pl. of *pilegesh*] sons, Avraham gave presents *and sent them away in preference of his son Isaac*, while still living east of Qedem' (Gen. 25:5-6). Note that Hebrew *pilegesh* (concubine) is a clear loan from Greek *pallakis* (concubine), which is a post-Homeric word (first attested in Herodotus).

Odysseus says of himself: 'I too once dwelt in a house of my own among men, *a rich man in a wealthy house*' (*Od*. 19.75). Another example is the cattle-tending slave man Philoctius telling how Odysseus set him 'over his *cattle* [*epi bousin*] … and now these *wax past counting*; in no other way could the breed of broad-browed cattle yield better increase' (*Od*. 20.209–13). (Compare Avraham's richness in flocks, Gen. 24:34-5.)

Each father in the Laertes–Odysseus–Telemachus dynasty leaves his possessions and authority to his only son. One of Penelope's suitors says to Telemachus: 'may the son of Cronos [Zeus] never make you king [*basilēa*] in sea girt Ithaca which thing *is by birth your heritage*' (*Od*. 1.386–7). Similarly, Telemachus says to the feasting suitors: 'but the house of Odysseus, and it is *for me that he inherited it*' (20.265–6). The first king of the dynasty, Laertes, bought Eurycleia as a slave girl when she was young (1.428ff.), and she became in her old age a stewardess over the house, rearing Odysseus and Telemachus, which clearly shows that Laertes bequeathed her, as well as his possessions and authority over Ithaca, to his son Odysseus. Laertes is alive all through the epos (helping Odysseus to fight the suitors in the end, cf. *Od*. 24.498 and 513), but he is very old, so old that Penelope weaves him a shroud (2.98ff.). That Laertes was king over Ithaca is implied by what Athena, in the guise of Mentes, whose father was a king (*anassō* in *Od*. 1.180) over the Taphians, tells Telemachus in *Odyssey* 1.185–8ff., namely that Telemachus' grandfather Laertes was a friend of his kingly father, who visited Laertes occasionally when passing through Ithaca. This clearly implies that Laertes was of the same rank, a king. That Laertes will leave his possessions to his *only* son Odysseus is also manifest in their meeting at the end of the epos, when Odysseus reveals his identity to his father, reminding him of the attack of the boar on Mount Parnassus (*Od*. 24.330ff.). Then Odysseus goes on to remind his father that, when he was a child, Laertes took him for a walk through his trees and orchards: 'pear trees you gave me thirteen and apple trees and forty big trees. And rows of vines, too, *you promised to give me*' (*Od*. 24.339–43).

(45) *A cluster of four motifs* An old house servant, who overlooks the entire estate, caretaker of the master's son and bound by oath to fulfil the master's wish, was Eurycleia, the most important house-servant of the Laertes–Odysseus–Telemachus dynasty (see *Od*. 1.435 and 1.428–42). Eurycleia has served the house from her youth (*proth-ēbēn*, first-youth in 1.431), with authority over the house, and honoured by the master no less than his wife. She is most faithful to the master and closest to his son. She keeps the 'high roofed treasure chamber … where gold and bronze lay piled…' (*Od*. 2.337–8). Telemachus asks her to open the doors of this house, calling her 'mai' (2.349), meaning 'nurse'. He asks her to swear 'to tell nothing of this to my mother [Penelope] … and the old woman *swore a great oath by the gods* to say nothing' (2.372–8). Eurycleia's great authority over her master's house is manifested also in *Odyssey* 4.742ff., where she asks Penelope: 'go up the house, pray Athene … do not trouble the old man [Laertes]'. She is called 'loyal nurse' (*philē trophos*) in 7.42, and in 2.345 she is called *gynē tamiè*, translated 'stewardess' (*tamiē* from *tamieia*:

the office of steward, housekeeping, management, from *tameuō* = to be house keeper, manager or steward). She keeps the house night and day with wisdom of mind (*Od*. 2.344–6). As commentators have noted, the importance of Eurycleia is also marked by the fact that her three-fold genealogy, 'daughter of Ops son of Peisenor' (*Od*. 2.347, cf. also 1.428), is given. The four traits that cluster around Eurycleia also describe Avraham's servant: 'Avraham said to the *eldest servant* of his house, the *steward of all his property* … I would have you *swear by Yahweh* … go to my land … to choose a wife for my *son Isaac*' (Gen. 24:2-4). And later on, 'the servant … *swore* to him' (Gen. 24:9).

(46) *Insistence on not remaining in (resp. not to go to) the bride's homeland* Odysseus is 'filled with longing for his return and for his wife [Penelope] … Calypso the beautiful goddess, keeps him prisoner in her hollow caves, yearning that he should be her husband' (*Od*. 1.13–15). She 'keeps back that unfortunate [Odysseus] …beguiles him that he may forget Ithaca. But Odysseus in his longing for … his own land [*gaiēs*], yearns to die' (1.56–9). Nausicaa desires Odysseus for a husband (6.243–5), while he urges his Phaeacian hosts to let him return to his homeland Ithaca: 'send me on my way in peace … may the gods bless … on my return may I find in my house my flawless wife with my friends and family un-scattered' (*Od*. 13.40–45). Odysseus' strong desire to return to his homeland, not to stay even with the most beautiful women, is a recurring motif.[18] The leitmotif of Odysseus' refusal to stay abroad in general, and in Nausicaa's land in particular, seems to boil down to the following very strange question that Avraham's servant asks his master: 'What if the woman [Rivka] does not want to come with me to this country? Shall I *take your son back to the country from which you came*?' (Gen. 24:5). The contextual strangeness of this question lies in the fact that it has no later bearing in the story, whether explicitly or implicitly, so it remains isolated within the story. The strange and artificial question raised by Avraham's servant relating to the possibility that the girl will refuse to go with him reverses Nausicaa and her father's explicit condition to Odysseus that he can have her for his wife *only if* he (and she) *remains with him among her kinsfolk the Phaeacians* (*Od*. 7.312–15). Avraham's servant raises a solution to this dilemma, namely to take Isaac to his father's fatherland; this corresponds to Nausicaa and her father's (hopeless) wish that Odysseus might agree to stay in Phaeacia. Avraham, however, promptly refuses the proposal:

> on no account take my son back there, Yahweh … took me from my father's home and from the land of my kinsfolk and he swore to me that he would give this country to my descendants … and if the woman does not want to come with you, you will be free from this oath of mine. Only do not take my son back there. (Gen. 24:6-9)

18. *Odyssey* 1.13, 1.21, 1.58, 1.75, 1.203, 5.15, 5.26, 5.37, 5.115, 5.144, 5.168, 5.204, 5.207, 5.220, 6.315, 6.331, 6.290, 7.151, 7.223, 7.320, 7.333, 8.31–2, 8.410, 8.461, 8.466, 13.42, 17.144, 17.149, 17.157, 17.535, 18.384, 19.84, 19.258.

Avraham's words here are as strange as the original question raised by his servant, because they have no effect on later parts of the story; nor are they reflected in any later passage in Genesis 24. However, they do correspond to Odysseus' insistence on going back to his homeland. The biblical author mixes in sentiments from the *Odyssey*.

(47) *Appellative names and Greek loan names* Homer is fond of appellative names, which describe some aspect of their bearer. For instance, 'Nausicaa' is from *naus*, ship (akin to Heb. *ani'ya*, vocalized '*oni'ya*', with the same meaning), because the Phaeacians excel in navigation, as testified in several passages in *Odyssey* 7–13; for instance, 'my ships [*nēes*] are the best' says Alcinous (Nausicaa's father) to Odysseus (*Od*. 7.327–8). Modern commentators like Hainsworth explain her name as an appellative, meaning 'excelling in ships'.[19] Another appellative name in Homer is Halcyone, derived from *halkuon* 'kingfisher bird', because of its plaintive note (*Il*. 5.562–3). The name of the goddess Ate is from *atē* (folly, delusion), as she is a goddess of mischief (*Il*. 19.91, 19.128–9). The name Odysseus is linked several times with the Greek *Odussastai*, signifying him as a 'man of pain' (*Od*. 1.62, 5.340, 423, 14.145–7, 19.275, 407–9). The name *Achilleus* (Achilles) is known to be combined from *achos* 'grief, pain' and *laos* 'people', because Achilles brought much pain and grief to many peoples, including his own people, the Achaeans – by his refusal to help them in the first battles against the Trojans in the *Iliad*, and he also brought many pains to the Trojans, of course, as described in *Iliad* 18.122ff.[20] Generally, ancient authors were fond of wordplay and folk etymologies, as is clearly shown in Plato's dialogue *Cratylus*, which is full of 'folk etymologies' of Greek words and names. It is not surprising, then, to find that our biblical isomorph of *Odyssey* 6–13, namely Genesis 24, has several appellative names, some of which draw on Greek roots.

Rivka is 'found, discovered' by Avraham's servant. Avraham instructs his servant 'go to my own land … and *choose* a wife' (Gen. 24:4), where the Hebrew for 'choose' here can be interpreted as synonym for 'find'. The servant prays that God will 'grant him a hit' (Gen. 24:12-14), and the girl 'showed up' in a surprise that drew amazement from the servant (Gen. 24:15-18). The atmosphere of the servant and Rivka's encounter is that of serendipity and precious *discovery*. Bearing in mind that the name Rivka is unattested outside the Bible, and lacks any root in Hebrew, it may have been loaned with consonantal metathesis from Greek *eurisko* (*find, discover*) with the diphthong '*eu*' being pronounced '*ev*' (e.g. *Eu*ripides–*Ev*ripedes, *Eu*genia–*Ev*genia, *Eu*cleides–*Ev*cleides and so

19. See Heubeck *et al*., *A Commentary on Homer's* Odyssey, on *Odyssey* 6.17.

20. For a full discussion on this etymology of *Achilleus* (Achilles), as well as on other appellative names in Homer, see Bruce Louden, 'Categories of Homeric Wordplay', *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, 125 (1995), 27–46. Further references on this widely discussed subject appear therein (*ibid*., 45–6), and a full book on the subject is Carolyn Higbie, *Heroes' Names, Homeric Identities*, Alfred Bates Lord Studies in Oral Tradition, vol. 10 (New York: Garland Publishing 1995).

on). One cannot forget Archimedes' merry cry: '*eurēka, eurēka*' = 'I found, I found' (at discovering the solution to King Heron's problem). In fact, this cry has become appropriate for every discovery throughout the ages. Greek *evri(s) ko* gives Hebrew *Rivka* (with metathesis *vri/riv*), making Rivka a kind of lucky find, a *discovery*. It is noteworthy that when Nausicaa, Rivka's pre-image, is first met by Odysseus, she fancies, in the name of her kinsfolk and her Phaeacian potential wooers: 'even if she [Nausicaa] has gone off and *found* [*eurēn* to be pronounced: *evrēn*] … from another people' (*Od*. 6.282–3). Thus, Nausicaa uses *eurisko* (pronounced *evrisko*) when speaking of finding a mate! Perhaps it was this passage of *Odyssey* 6.282–3 that inspired Rivka's name.

Bito-el: It is well known that the Masoretic vocalization Betu-el of the name בתואל for Rivka's father is essentially *arbitrary*, and the name can be vocalized 'Bito-el' as well. With such vocalization, the name becomes appellative: 'his daughter (is a) god or goddess' (compare 'Pni-el' meaning 'god's face' in Gen. 32:20). *Odyssey* 6–8 refers several times to Nausicaa (Rivka's pre-image), as well as to her parents and brothers, as gods or like-gods; here is a sample of passages relating to Nausicaa's godlike features. Already in *Odyssey* 5.35 we read of 'Phaeacians *who are near of kin to the gods* [*anchi-theoi*]'. Nausicaa is 'like the *immortal goddesses* in form and looks' (*Od*. 6.16); she is '*like Artemis*' (6.102). Odysseus says to her, '*If you are a goddess*, one of those who hold heaven, *to Artemis the daughter of Zeus* I liken you most nearly in form and stature' (6.150–53); he promises to pray to her '*as* [to] *a god* all my days' (*Od*. 8.467). In *Odyssey* 8.457, Nausicaa is described as having '*beauty of the gods*' (*theōn apo… kallos*). Her brothers are also 'men *like immortals*' (*Od*. 7.5), Nausicaa's mother Arête is looked upon by her husband and people 'as *a goddess*' (7.71) and Alcinous (Nausicaa's father) is 'made wise in council *by the gods*' (*Od*. 6.12). Arête's father (Nausicaa's grandfather), Rhexenor, is also '*godlike*' (7.146). With such an abundance of associations to the divine, it is little wonder that Rivka's father is named Bito-el, an appellative meaning that 'his daughter is a *goddess*'. The Bible has many appellative constructs with an -el ending: 'Pni-el', meaning 'God's face' – 'because I saw God face to face and my soul was saved' (Gen. 32:31); or 'Beit-el', meaning 'god's house', because 'there is god in this place … it is the house of god … and he called the place Beit-el' (Gen. 28:16-19). Also, the ancient geographical-ethnic name of Isra-el (attested in the Merneptah stele from *c*.1300 BCE) gets an appellative meaning: 'you stayed (*sarita*) with gods and men and you prevailed' (Gen. 32:29).

Malcah: מלכה (*mlkh*), Rivka's grand-mother (Gen. 24:15, 24), is vocalized 'Milcah' in the Masoretic text, but one can vocalize it 'Malcah' as well, an appellative: 'queen', like Arête, Nausicaa's mother (*Od*. 7.241). For a genealogical isomorphism between Malcah and Arete, see section 37 above.

Avraham: A biblical Levitic prayer to Yahweh reads: 'You chose Avram and you took him out of Ur Casdim and you altered his name to Avraham and you *found* [*matza'ta*] one whose heart was faithful' (Neh. 9:7-8). Thus, Avraham was *found* by Yahweh. The Greek *eurēma*, 'that which is *found'*, 'a discovery', is the nominal of *eurisko*. Since *eurēma* was pronounced '*evrēma*', it is plausible,

especially in view of Nehemiah 9:7-8, that 'Avraham' is an appellative derived from *eurēma*! Avraham was promised many unexpected fortunes from Yahweh: land, properties, as well as descendants (Gen. 12:1-3, 12:7, 13:15-17, 15:4-6, 15:18, 17:2-8). The Greek *eurēma*, 'discovery,' also '*unexpected gain*', '*fortune*' (see LSJ s.v. *eurēma*), a meaning which can be found, for example, in Euripides, *Medea*, 716, where *eurēma* is translated 'fortune'.[21]

Lavan: Lavan merges Laodamas (pronounced Lavdamas) with Laomedon (see section 35 above).

Rachel: Genesis 29:9ff. is an isomorph of *Odyssey* 6–7 (see Appendix). While Jacob takes on the role of Odysseus, Rachel takes the role of Nausicaa, and Lavan (Rachel's father) that of Alcinous. With this isomorphism in mind, the unusual name Rachel, 'little sheep' (cf. Gen. 32:14; Isa. 53:7), can be neatly explained. Much as Nausicaa's name (meaning 'excelling in ships') reflects her father's role as a king of professional navigators and mariners (*Od*. 7.327–8), Rachel's name reflects her father's role as shepherd.

(48) *Anti-isomorphism: abstinence versus gluttony* When Avraham's servant is offered food by Lavan, he strangely says: 'I will eat nothing until I have spoken my words' (Gen. 24:33). Remembering his long trip from Canaan hitherto, his abstinence from food is unnatural, if not at least strange, but it can be neatly explained as the biblical author's reaction to Odysseus' gross gluttony for food in Alcinous' house, expressed in *Odyssey* 7.213–21. Odysseus lengthily complains that his belly bids him to eat, while, as the reader knows, he already ate at least twice on that evening (6.247–50 and 7.175–7). This gluttony was condemned by all ancient scholiasts of Homer, as well as by Athenaeus, *Deipnosophists*, 10.412 b–c.[22] The biblical author 'corrects' Odysseus' gluttony by making his isomorph abstain from food!

Appendix: two further passages in the Pentateuch

The following discussion is critical for the claim of dependence on *Odyssey*. The five-fold S.G.W.FH.B-motif attested in *Odyssey* 6ff. and Genesis 24 occurs twice again in the Pentateuch, but nowhere else in the Bible. Moses meets Yetro's seven daughters, his future bride, Zipora, among them, near the well, and goes to her father's house to become her bridegroom (Exod. 2:17-22). Similarly, Jacob meets Rachel, with Lavan in the role of the girl's father (Gen. 29:9-26). These two other appearances in the Pentateuch of our cluster of motifs might be used to argue that this five-fold motif is indigenous to the Pentateuch, or universal. However, a close reading reveals that both passages seem to be similarly modelled on *Odyssey* 6ff.!

21. See Euripides, *Works*, Volume 1, translated by Arthur S. Way, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980 [1919]). The shift from Avram to Avra*ha*m, attested in Gen. 17:5, can be explained by the long accent on the *ē* in *eurēma.*
22. See Heubeck *et al.*, *A Commentary on Homer's* Odyssey on this passage.

Moses and Zipora

This short biblical passage also contains three further motifs from *Odyssey* 6–7, in addition to the S.G.W.FH.B- motif. The first is that of the father reproaching his daughter for inhospitality. When the daughters tell their father Yetro of the stranger they met, he reproaches them: 'Where is he? Why have you left him? Call him to eat bread' (Exod. 2:21). This reproach corresponds to Alcinous' implicit reproach of Nausicaa, for being impolite in telling Odysseus that 'my daughter didn't behave rightly with you for she didn't bring you with all the other women and servants here to our house' (*Od*. 7.296–300). The second motif, that of the father asking the stranger to remain and marry his daughter, is implicit in the Pentateuch: 'Moses *consented* [*va'yoel*] to *remain* with the man [Yetro] and he gave his daughter Zipora to Moses' (Exod. 2:21). Alcinous makes the same offer to Odysseus: 'Better … I would… that you … being like-minded with me, would have my daughter to wife and be called my son, *and remain here*; a house and possessions would I give you' (*Od*. 7.312–15). The third motif is that of the father's many possessions. Alcinous promised Odysseus a house and possessions (*ktēmata*) if he should remain and marry Nausicaa (*Od*. 7.314). These *possessions* are flocks and cattle, which is a frequent meaning of *ktēmata* in Homer. Similarly, Yetro's daughters 'came…to water their father's flocks' (Exod. 2:16). Also, 'Moses shepherded the flocks of his father-in-law Yetro' (Exod. 3:1). To this comparison, we can add two more passages adding evidence for the dependence of Exodus 2 on the *Odyssey*.

(1) *A princess bathing in the river with her handmaids* That Pharaoh's daughter bathes with her handmaids in the river (Exod. 2:4) can be understood as an isomorph of the scene of Nausicaa bathing with her handmaids (*Od*. 6.85ff.). Moreover, Pharaoh's daughter and her handmaids 'go along the river' (Exod. 2:5), and find Moses in the *chest beside the river*, much as Nausicaa and her handmaids, playing beside the river, find Odysseus (*Od*. 6.116ff.). Both Moses and Odysseus are helpless and *pitied* by the girls (Exod. 2:6; *Od*. 6.175, 192ff.), who are princesses and who take them to their father's castles.

In addition, we can identify quite specific literary 'fingerprints', the first of which are the reeds by the river. Odysseus finds shelter in the reeds (*schoinō* in *Od*. 5.563), and Moses' chest is hidden in the reeds (*suph*, Exod. 2:3-5). Also, the *chest* (*te'va*, Exod. 2:3) in which Moses is put is made waterproof. The meaning is basically 'boat' (cf. Gen. 6:14ff. where Noah's boat is called *te'va*). Moses' chest-boat might be identified as an isomorph of Odysseus' *raft*, on which he floated from Calypso's island to the bush of reeds along the river, where he fell asleep (*Od*. 5.33, 5.174ff., 5.242ff. and 5.462ff.).[23] A third 'fingerprint' shared by Exodus 2:6 with the *Odyssey* is *weeping*. Moses is found *weeping* in the chest

23. The 'chest' or 'small boat' in which Moses was put on the Nile was made out of גמא (Exod. 2:3) or gome, loaned from Greek *kommi*, 'gum' (Latin *gummi*), which is the plant material from which boats on the river Nile were made, according to Herodotus 2.96.

(Exod. 2:6), much as Odysseus *weeps* throughout his Odyssey, as every Homeric reader easily recognizes.[24]

(2) *An unwitnessed murderer is forced to leave the land (a three-fold parallelism)* Moses sees an Egyptian hitting a Hebrew man. After looking around and checking that he is unwatched, he kills the Egyptian (Exod. 2:11-13). Realizing that his crime had become known, he runs away to another land (Exod. 2:14-15). This is modelled on *Odyssey* 13.256–70, a story Odysseus tells Athena about having killed a man who had tried to rob him of his Trojan booty (13.270). Odysseus had seen that he was unwatched by anybody (13.269–70), then killed the man, and this homicide forced him to run away to another land (13.258–9). A three-fold 'fingerprint' – an unwitnessed murder forces him to leave the land – can be recognized in both texts. Let us note that in both texts, the crime of homicide functions as a retaliation or punishment: for hitting the Hebrew and for trying to rob Odysseus. Several motifs in Exodus 3, borrowed from Hesiod *Theogony* 1–35 and from Herodotus 4.150 and 159, have been recently discussed by Wajdenbaum,[25] demonstrating the versatility of the biblical author in using motifs from Classical literature.

Jacob and Rachel

Genesis 29:9ff. and *Odyssey* 6–7 share several motifs in addition to the S.G.W.FH.B-motif. Lavan says to Jacob: 'Better I give her [Rachel] to you then to another man; *remain* (here) with me' (Gen. 29:19). This offer is modelled on Alcinous' offer to Odysseus to *remain* with him and marry his daughter in *Odyssey* 7.312–15, and so is Moses' *consent to remain* with Yetro. As Rivka's beauty in Genesis 24 reflects Nausicaa's beauty, which Odysseus so admired in *Odyssey* 6–7 (see paragraphs 5 and 12, above), so 'Rachel was of *beautiful* form and of *beautiful* look and Jacob *loved* Rachel' (Gen. 29:19). Finally, assembling all the people for a great feast is a motif-complex that is used in Genesis after Jacob worked for Rachel for seven years (an isomorph of the seven years Odysseus remains with Calypso in *Od*. 7.259); he then asks Lavan to have her for his wife, as had been agreed. Lavan '*assembled all* the people of the place and he made a *feast* [*mish'teh*]' (Gen. 29:22). The pre-image of this feast is the magnificent feast (*daita*) that Alcinous made for the people on the occasion of Odysseus' departure in *Odyssey* 8.5ff., in which assembling all the people is a prolonged task worthy of Pallas Athena (*Od*. 8.7–58). The Greek root *ageirō*, meaning 'gather, assemble (the people)', appearing not less than six times in *Odyssey* 8.4–58, is well reflected by *assembled* (*va'ye'esoph*) in Genesis 22:29.

24. Here is a sample of passages in the *Odyssey* where Odysseus is weeping: *Odyssey* 1.55, 1.153–4, 1.157–8, 8.86, 8.93–4, 8.527, 8.531–2, 9.293, 10.497, 10.571, 11.5, 11.55, 11.395, 11.466, 12.12, 13.198, 13.219, 14.280, 24.234. Here are some passages where his comrades are weeping: *Odyssey* 10.201, 10.209, 10.241, 10.398, 10.454, 10.566–8. And in *Odyssey* 1.242, 2.81 and 23.282, Odysseus' son Telemachus is weeping.
25. Wajdenbaum, *Argonauts of the Desert*, 150–52.

After preparing the ships for Odysseus' departure, Alcinous invites the assembled people to the feast: 'quickly go your way to my house and prepare for the *feast* [*daita*], and I will prepare bountifully for *all*' (*Od*. 8.38–9). When the halls and rooms of the palace are filled with men, young and old, the feast begins. It includes eating and drinking wine, heroic singing, athletic games and so on, filling books 8–13 of the *Odyssey*. One can also discern the motif of an *unmarried* couple making love during the feast in Genesis 29:23 (Jacob and Lea), reflecting the same motif in *Odyssey* 8.267–367 (Ares and Aphrodite).

Conclusion

Genesis 24, Exodus 2:17-22 and Genesis 29:9ff. are all modelled on Homer's *Odyssey* 6–13. They all use the S.G.W.FH.B-motif as a leitmotif, with each one of them drawing some additional elements from the epos.

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7

Hesiod's Heroic Age and the biblical Period of the Judges

Philippe Guillaume

The popularity of Martin Noth's hypothesis of the Deuteronomistic History, in the post-World War II period, produced a chronological gap of several centuries between the pre-Achaemenid date Noth ascribed to the author of the History and the time the Jewish chronographers flourished. The gap voided the value of the study of biblical historical texts in light of Hellenistic historians, and set biblical historiography on an equal footing with the earliest Greek historical work, in particular that of Hecataeus of Miletus, written around 500 BCE. Ideological concerns relative to the historicity of the Bible reinforced the isolation of the biblical historical books from Hellenistic chronographies, and their concern with the reconciliation of biblical data with Greek and Egyptian accounts of their own past.[1] Seven decades after the publication of Martin Noth's *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien*, nothing has replaced it yet. At most, the expression 'so-called' has been stuck in front of it, with little change in substance.[2] The original so-called Deuteronomistic History is now said to have been devoid of any element from the Book of Judges. The invention of a Period of the Judges and the integration of the Book of Judges in the historiography supposedly occurred during the Babylonian period.[3] As something similar is found in the *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien*, Martin Noth is to modern scholarship what Oannes was to ancient scholarship. According to Berossus, Oannes was an antediluvian figure who had taught arts and crafts to mankind, and after whom 'nothing more was invented'.[4]

Nevertheless, the increasing number of biblical texts viewed as the products of the Persian and Hellenistic periods is shifting the formation of the Historical Books closer to Jewish chronographers. I am thankful to the editors of the present volume for the opportunity to flesh out an idea that I barely touched upon

1. L. L. Grabbe, 'Chronography in Hellenistic Jewish Historiography', *SBL 1979 Seminar Paper*, P. J. Hachtmeier (ed.) (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press) vol. II, 43–68.
2. T. Römer, *The So-called Deuteronomistic History: a Sociological Historical and Literary Introduction* (London: T&T Clark, 2005).
3. *Ibid*., 137.
4. Berossus 680 fr. I,4 *FGH*.

ten years ago. In my thesis, I claimed that Alexandria was the place, or at least the time, when the Book of Judges was inserted between Joshua and Samuel, to produce a Period of the Judges and the biblical chronology as we know it.[5] The present chapter considers the Period of the Judges in light of Hesiod's sequence of the 'five ages of man', but before that, the amount of evidence for a pre-Hellenistic Period of the Judges must be weighed.

Evidence of the Period of the Judges

To give the so-called Deuteronomistic History hypothesis all the benefit of the doubt, I take Thomas Römer's temporal designation 'Babylonian period' in the broadest possible sense. Following Diana Edelman's proposal that the second temple was built as late as the reign of Artaxerxes I, the first century of Achaemenid rule over Palestine can be considered as the continuation of the Neo-Babylonian period, ending definitively at the foundation of a Persian fortress in Jerusalem around 450 BCE. Is there any evidence for the formation of the so-called Deuteronomistic History in a 'Babylonian period' taken that broadly?

Ben Sira

As far as I know, the clearest extra-biblical attestation of a Period of the Judges understood as an era between Joshua's conquest and the kingdoms is found in Ben Sira's Praise of the Fathers:

> The judges also, with their respective names, whose hearts did not fall into idolatry and who did not turn away from the Lord – may their memory be blessed! May their bones send forth new life from where they lie, and may the names of those who have been honored live again in their children!
>
> (Ben Sira 46:11–12)

Ruth

Within the Hebrew Bible, Ruth 1:1 is the clearest biblical attestation of a pre-monarchic Period of the Judges. As little is known about the formation of the Greek canon, I only consider significant that this reference is outside the so-called Deuteronomistic History, in the *Historical* Books of the Greek Bible, while the Hebrew Bible rejects the notion of historical collection, and classifies Ruth outside the Prophets.

2 Samuel 7:11

There are two references to the *day* of the Judges within the historiography. Nathan mentions a 'day when YHWH ordered judges over Israel' (צויתי שפטים היום אשר) as he warns David that his plan to build a temple has been rejected (2 Sam. 7:11). In the canon as we know it, these judges naturally refer to the

5. P. Guillaume, *Waiting for Josiah: The Judges* (London: T&T Clark International, 2004), 227–53.

Book of Judges, but the judges of 2 Samuel 7:11 can also be read as a reference to 1 Samuel 8:1, Samuel's appointment of his sons as judges for Israel (וישׂם … שׁפטים לישׂראל). The singular יום in 2 Samuel 7:11 supports the latter option, a particular appointment of judges on a single day, whereas the Book of Judges depicts a succession of judges over a period of three centuries. It is significant that the Alexandrian translators rendered the 'day' of 2 Samuel 7:11 with a plural that strongly suggests that the Hebrew writers only knew of this particular appointment of judges, while their Alexandrian colleagues were aware of the extended Period of the Judges. Clearly, the Greek translation displays a clearer awareness of a pre-monarchic Period of the Judges than does the Hebrew text of 2 Samuel 7:11.

2 Samuel 11:21

An explicit reference to the episode of the death of Abimelech is found in the mouth of Joab in 2 Samuel 11:21. Despite the naming of Abimelech's father as ירבשׁת instead of ירבעל, the reference to Judges 9:53 is clear, thanks to the setting of the episode at Thebes (Judg. 9:50). The lateness of this reference to the Book of Judges is indicated by the variant attested by the Septuagint, which locates the episode in θαμασι and displays variants of Abimelech's patronym (Jerobaal, Jeroboam or Nedobaal in the Peshitta). Intertextual studies indicate that Judges 9 is *not* drawing on an awareness of 2 Samuel 11.[6] Hence, Joab's reminder of Abimelech's death most likely belongs to the reception of the Period of the Judges, rather than to an early form of the Book of Judges, before it was inserted between Joshua and Samuel. Although modern scholars detect a veiled critique of David in Joab's mention of Abimelech's death in the context of the death of Uriah[7] – hence the opposite message of the pro-monarchic refrain in Judges 17–21 – the reference cannot be used as evidence for the formation of the biblical chronology earlier than the Hellenistic era.

2 Kings 23

Another reference to judges is found in the report of Josiah's Passover (2 Kgs 23:22). This time, there is no discussion over the plural, and these days of the judges are clearly set before the days of the kings of Israel and of the kings of Judah. Hence, 2 Kings 23:22 could be taken as evidence for the existence of a pre-monarchic Period of the Judges. To demonstrate that the Book of Judges was integrated in the so-called Deuteronomistic Historiography in the Babylonian era, one simply needs to ascribe a Babylonian date to this text, and the notion of a pre-monarchic era when Judges ruled Israel becomes a fact that subsequent biblical writers took for granted. The problem is that the post-Babylonian parallel in 2 Chronicles 35:18 states that no Passover such as Josiah's took place in Israel, from the days of Samuel the prophet. Either the Chronicler had never heard of the Period of the Judges or, if he had, he rejected it. In any case, the

6. H. Shalom-Guy, 'Three-Way Intertextuality: Some Reflections of Abimelech's Death at Thebez in Biblical Narrative', *JSOT* 34 (2010), 419–32.
7. K. Bodner, 'Is Joab a Reader-Response Critic?', *JSOT* 27 (2002), 19–35 (30).

evidence provided by 2 Kings 23:22 for the invention of a period of the Judges during the Neo-Babylonian period is compromised.

Another problem arises as some Hebrew manuscripts read כל in 2 Kings 23:22 instead of וכל, between the days of the judges and the days of the kings. Instead of days of the judges *and* days of the kings, these texts compare Josiah's Passover with the way the Passover was celebrated 'in the days of the judges who judged Israel all the days of the kings of Israel and the kings of Judah'. One may dismiss this as a faulty reading, since none of the kings of Judah and of Israel is explicitly reported to have appointed judges. At most, the judges who judged during the days of the kings refer to the judges that Moses instructed Israel to appoint throughout its towns, once settled in the land (Deut. 16:18). In this case, the lack of specific mention of judges by the kings cannot be adduced as evidence against the notion that they were meant as pre-monarchic days. The kings should have appointed judges. Since no text explicitly states that they did not do so, the texts that mention 'days of the judges who judged Israel' within the days of the kings make sense as such. In this way, the form וכל is a correction of the word כל, once the pre-monarchic Period of the Judges was invented. The fact that this reading is supported by the Syriac tradition and by some Targumim strongly suggests that the pre-monarchic Period of the Judges was invented later than the so-called Babylonian period.

Nehemiah 9

Another attempt at saving the hypothesis of an early date for the invention of the pre-monarchic Period of the Judges could be based on Nehemiah 9:27-9, which uses terms and concepts that are clearly reminiscent of the saviours scheme. Arguing that this historical summary was written before the Persians built the second temple would confirm the date of the invention of the Period of the Judges at the very end of the Babylonian period. The problem is that Nehemiah 9 says nothing about the time of the monarchy.[8] While Nehemiah 9 clearly alludes to the Book of Judges, this chapter, dated by many to the Hellenistic period, is no more aware of a clear periodization of Israel's past than the other historical summaries. The same pertains to the Psalms.

Psalms

Despite the similarities of Psalm 68:8-11 with Judges 5, the scope of this historical summary is limited to the Exodus and the wanderings of Israel in the wilderness while verses 12-24 may refer to the conquest of Canaan.[9] No reference to the Period of the Judges can be discerned in this 'historical' Psalm. With mentions of Massah and Meribah, Psalm 81:7-10 also focuses on the wilderness period. In Psalm 99:6, Moses and Aaron are followed immediately by Samuel

8. T. Römer, 'Extra-Pentateuchal Biblical Evidence for the Existence of a Pentateuch? The Case of "Historical Summaries", Especially in the Psalms', *Pentateuch: International Perspectives on Current Research*, T. Dozeman, K. Schmid & B. J. Schwartz (eds) (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 471–88 (477).
9. E. Haglund, *Historical Motifs in the Psalms* (Malmö: Gleerup, 1984), 11–14.

among those who called on YHWH's name. Although Samson twice calls out to YHWH (אל יהוה קרא, Judg. 15:18; 16:28), the omission of any figure from the Book of Judges can easily be explained by the dearth of pious invocation in Judges. The Psalmist may not have considered Samson as a paragon of piety, but the omission of more respectful heroes of the days of the judges either shows that the composer of this Psalm was not at all concerned with the periodization of Israel's past, or that he had no notion of a distinct Period of the Judges. More detailed is the 'historical' summary in Psalm 105, which binds references to Abraham and Jacob (no Isaac) with the Exodus and the plagues that struck Egypt. Like Psalm 68:12-24, Psalm 105 displays some similarities with the conquest narratives, but makes no reference to Israel's life in Canaan.[10]

With echoes of the exile drawn from Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, Psalm 107 is structured by a refrain in verses 6, 13, 19 and 28: 'Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress.' The thematic parallel with the cycle of apostasy, oppression and deliverance that characterizes the stories of saviours in the Book of Judges is striking. Yet, no allusion to Judges has been identified in Psalm 107. This has led to the suggestion that the Psalm marks a departure from the 'limits of the old "sacred history" formerly drawn at the Conquest or the enthronement of David'.[11] Or is it the notion of an ancient sacred history complete with a Period of the Judges that is faulty?

Sisera, Jabin, Oreb, Zeeb, Zebah and Zalmunna, oppressors whose defeats are related in the Book of Judges, are mentioned in Psalm 83:10-13, the sole occurrence of figures from Judges in the Psalms. Yet, the weight of this evidence is relative. Sisera and Jabin are also mentioned in 1 Samuel 12:9 and the next verses mention the cycle of apostasy, oppression and deliverance (1 Sam. 12:10-11). Hence, it is possible to argue that the Psalmist only had an indirect knowledge of the stories of the judges through the Book of Samuel. The argument gains weight from the statement that Sisera and Jabin were destroyed at 'Ain Dor (Ps. 83:10) since 'Ain Dor never occurs in Judges. Combined with the position of Samuel immediately after Moses and Aaron in Psalm 99:6, the defeat of Sisera and Jabin at 'Ain Dor is another clue that in the Psalms, the days of the judges are associated with figures at the beginning of the Book of Samuel – Samuel, Eli and his sons – four individuals who also judged Israel (1 Sam. 4:18; 7:6-16; 8:1-2). Moreover, the fact that it is the defeated oppressors (Sisera and Jabin) who are named, instead of the heroes who defeated them (Deborah, Barak and Gideon), supports the suspicion that the entire Psalter displays no clear awareness of the Book of Judges as representing a distinct heroic age in Israel's past. Only the names of Oreb, Zeeb, Zebah and Zalmunna presuppose a direct knowledge of the Book of Judges. While Oreb is also the name of a rock in Isaiah 10:26, Zeeb, Zebah and Zalmunna only occur in Judges 7–8 and Psalm 83:11. Therefore, Psalm 83 is unique in referring to Israelite victories in the time of the judges. The 'historical' motifs in the other Psalms refer to Creation, the Exodus and the Conquest. The time of the judges is peripheral in the memory of

10. *Ibid*., 29.
11. *Ibid*., 35.

the Psalter, and it is not anchored in a sequence of 'historical' periods. Psalm 83 makes the victory over Midian, Sisera and the other foes of the past a paradigm for the victory over a vast conspiracy involving Edom, Ishmael, Moab, Hagar, Gebal, Ammon, Amalek, Philistia, Tyre and Assyria. Such a rag-bag of traditional oppressors makes no attempt to reflect particular historical circumstances.

Apparent allusions only

Apart from Ruth 1:1, the concept of a distinct pre-monarchic Period of the Judges is hardly explicit in the Hebrew Bible. Psalm 83 certainly reflects the core of the Book of Judges, but without any chronological interest. As for Nehemiah 9, it supports a date for the invention of the pre-monarchic Period of the Judges much later than the Babylonian period. While Römer cautiously states that Nehemiah 9:27-9 'apparently allude[s] to the Dtr depiction of the time of the judges',[12] the allusion does not support Römer's date for the so-called Deuteronomistic History, since Nehemiah 9 is later than the Neo-Babylonian era. Were Nehemiah 9 a Hellenistic text, it would combine nicely with Sirach 46 to indicate the second century BCE as the earliest evidence for the invention of the pre-monarchic Period of the Judges.

Chronographers

As the latest point in time for the rise of the concept of a pre-monarchic Period of the Judges, the second century BCE corresponds to the moment when the biblical past was structured in periods with the formation of the Historical Books in the wake of the translation of the Alexandrian Bible. The organization of the past in specific periods would have elicited the interest of Hellenistic Jewish authors. The problem is that the relevant Fragment 2 of Eupolemus, the first Jewish chronographer, ignores the Period of the Judges:

> And Eupolemus says in a certain 'On the Prophecy of Elijah' that Moses prophesied for forty years. Then Joshua the son of Nun prophesied for thirty years; he lived one hundred and ten years and pitched the sacred tabernacle in Shiloh. *After this* Samuel was prophet. Then by the will of God Saul was chosen by Samuel to be king and died after ruling twenty-one years …[13]

Eupolemus was obviously interested in biblical chronologies, but he makes no mention of the Judges, which, according to the rich chronological data in the book, lasted more than three centuries (over 200 years of the saviours and seventy years of the minor judges). Another Hellenistic Jewish author, Demetrius the Chronographer, is likely to have integrated the Period of the Judges in his work. Unfortunately, none of the six fragments of Demetrius deals with passages where we could have expected him to mention a Period of the Judges. Hence,

12. Römer, 'Extra-Pentateuchal Biblical Evidence', 477.
13. F. Fallon, 'Eupolemus', *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, J. H. Charlesworth (ed.) (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1985), 2:865–6, emphasis added.

Fragment 2 of Eupolemus is the only evidence available, and it clearly omits the judges.

Faced with the puzzle of Eupolemus' omission of the judges, Wacholder repeats Freudenthal's argument, though he admits that it is not conclusive. The argument is based on the phrase 'afterwards' (μετὰ δὲ τοῦτα), which introduces Samuel.[14] Since these words are not found elsewhere in the fragments of Eupolemus, Freudenthal explained that they signalled an abbreviation or simplification of Eupolemus' text by Alexander Polyhistor.[15] Two points are adduced as evidence for the excerptor's careless work. David is presented as Saul's son, and Solomon was crowned by Eli. Wacholder understands these changes as meant to avoid the discreditable story of how David became king, and the equally problematic end of Eli's sons and the rise of the Zadokite.[16] If the rationale for the first change is convincing enough, the second one is less clear, and neither is relevant to the omission of the Period of the Judges. Spiro drew the more logical conclusion that the Book of Judges was not known to Eupolemus, but he explained the ignorance by stating that the reading of the Book of Judges was discouraged during the Second Temple.[17] The data recovered from the Dead Sea Scrolls supports this claim, but it equally applies to the other Former Prophets. Among the remains of a dozen of scrolls of the Former Prophets, the Book of Joshua is represented by two manuscripts, Judges by three, Samuel by four and Kings by three manuscripts.[18] Although there are only two copies of Joshua in the DSS, Eupolemus knows Joshua and calculates his term as a prophet, but ignores the Book of Judges despite the three copies of it in the DSS. Therefore, Spiro's argument is not sufficient to explain Eupolemus' omission. Despite Freudenthal's claim that 'Though deviations from the Bible are common enough in Eupolemus, it is unthinkable that he knew nothing of the heroic time of the Judges and reported nothing about it',[19] the evidence

14. B. Z. Wacholder, *Eupolemus: A Study of Judaeo-Greek Literature* (Cincinnati, OH: Hebrew Union College Press, 1974), 130.
15. J. Freudenthal, *Hellenistische Studien* (Breslau: H. Skutsch, 1875), 121: '*Wenn wir demnach lesen, dass Samuel nach Josua Prophet geworden sei, so kann damit keine unmittelbare Aufeinanderfolge gemeint sein. Eupolemus hatte sicherlich nach der Erwähnung Josua's noch Manches über die nachfolgende Zeit berichtet, was Alexander, sei es absichtlich oder unabsichtlich, in seinem Excerpt unterdrückt haben muss*.' ('When we read, therefore, that Samuel had become Prophet after Joshua, no immediate succession thus seems meant. Eupolemus had certainly reported many things about the period, following the reference to Joshua, which Alexander, whether intentionally or unintentionally, suppressed in his excerpt.')
16. Wacholder, *Eupolemus*, 130–31.
17. A. Spiro, 'Samaritans, Tobiads, and Judahites in Pseudo-Philo', *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research* 20 (1951), 279–355 (298 n. 37).
18. P. Guillaume, 'Philadelphus' Alexandria as Cradle of Biblical Historiography', *Ptolemy II Philadelphus and his World*, P. McKechnie & P. Guillaume (eds) (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 247–55 (252–3).
19. J. Freudenthal, *Hellenistische Studien* (Breslau: H. Skutsch, 1875), 121: '*Abweichungen von der Bibel finden sich bei Eupolemos häufig genug, aber undenkbar ist, dass er von*

makes the unthinkable probable. One could argue that Eupolemus or Polyhistor had good reasons not to mention the Judges in a work or chapter titled *On the Prophecy of Elijah*, which focuses on prophets. If prophets are indeed few in Judges, they do exist. Deborah is described as prophetess in Judges 4:4, and there is the anonymous prophet of Judges 6:8. Moreover, from what is left of his work, Eupolemus was prone to expand and embellish his biblical sources, and Alexander Polyhistor had the tendency to follow his sources closely.[20] Therefore, the fact that Eupolemus smoothed out the biblical traditions about David and Solomon does not account for the glaring omission of the Period of the Judges by Eupolemus or by Polyhistor. It is out of character for both of them. The words μετὰ δὲ τοῦτα can simply refer to the events that Eupolemus mentions before turning to Samuel: Joshua set up the tent in Shiloh. After this, Samuel was prophet. There is no binding reason why Eupolemus would have purposefully omitted the Period of the Judges, had he known it.

If Eupolemus was one of the two deputies sent by Judas Maccabeus (1 Macc. 8:17; 2 Macc. 4:11) to Rome in *c*.161 BCE, his ignorance of the Period of the Judges makes sense, since Sirach 46, the earliest attestation of the Period of the Judges so far, was penned a few decades earlier at most. If, as suggested by Paul McKechnie, Ben Sira wrote his 'Praise of the Fathers' in Alexandria, the geographic distance adds to the temporal closeness to account for Eupolemus' ignorance.[21] The unthinkable is thus logical. The Period of the Judges had only been conceived recently by Ben Sira or by his Alexandrian colleagues, and it had not reached the attention of Eupolemus, who was working in Palestine.

This does not mean that the Book of Judges did not exist, but if Eupolemus knew it, in his eyes it did not constitute a distinctive age between Joshua and Samuel. Two centuries later, pseudo-Philo devotes more than half of his work on the Period of the Judges, as though he were filling a lacuna that was glaring once the biblical Historical Books had become an authoritative body of texts. Hence, Eupolemus' silence over the judges is a mystery only when the book is conceived as having been an integral part of the biblical chronographic representation of Israel's past centuries, before Alexander the Great. Once this notion is removed, Eupolemus' silence is strong evidence of the late rise of the Deuteronomistic History in the Alexandrian period.

The lateness of the construction of the Period of the Judges is supported by the long Greek addition after Joshua 24:33. The Greek version mentions the Ark, Phineas, the worship of Astarte and Astaroth, and jumps directly to the oppression by Eglon. Alexander Rofé claimed that it reflects a stage in the development of the Hebrew text that is most likely earlier than the Masoretic text.[22] Although

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der Heldenzeit der Richter Nichts gewusst und Nichts berichted habt.'

20. J. Giblet, 'Eupolème et l'historiographie juive', *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 39 (1963), 539–54 (550).
21. P. McKechnie, 'The Career of Joshua Ben Sira', *Journal of Theological Studies*, 51(1) (2000), 3–26.
22. A. Rofé, 'The End of the Book of Joshua According to the Septuagint', *Henoch* 4 (1982), 17–36.

Rösel considers the Greek addition secondary, Emanuel Tov accepts Rofé's notion that it preserves a transition between Joshua and Judges that pre-dates the production of Judges 1:1–3:11.[23] Tov presumes that Judges 1:1–3:11 was added in Judges after the original book was separated into Joshua and Judges. In this, Tov remains within the framework of an original Deuteronomistic History. The notion of a Period of the Judges conceived in the wake of the translation of what became the Historical Books better accounts for the different forms of the transition between the two books. Instead of postulating the splitting of a continuous narrative, and then several laborious attempts at fixing the division, it is more economical to view the Greek material and Judges 1:1–3:11 as successive forms of the transition between two separate scrolls, which until then had never been meant to be read in sequence.

Finally, the lateness of the construction of the Period of the Judges is evidenced by the lack of attestation of the names of the heroes of the Book of Judges in late antiquity epigraphy.[24] The intricate transition is the best proof that the Book of Judges was not originally read as representing a distinct period between the conquest of Canaan and the Kings. The tortuous argumentation of Judges 1–2 is evidence that the book was squeezed between Joshua and Samuel at a late stage of its development, well after it formed an independent scroll.

The placement of the Book of Ruth after Judges in the Greek canon to form a 'period' of the Judges is another clue of the late formation of a historiography that included a Period of the Judges, and thus provides a firm basis for the discussion of the periodization of Israel's past. It is from this starting point that the reconstruction of the process that led to the invention of the Period of the Judges should proceed, going back in time and tracking the process backward from the Nothian approach, which starts by postulating a hypothesis in the days of Josiah, or in the Neo-Babylonian era. The evidence for this hypothesis is late and fleeting. Instead of evoking more accidents of transmission to save Noth's Babylonian date, I turn to the Age of the Heroes conceived by the Greeks as a specific period in the history of humanity, in order to find another model.

The Period of the Judges as the Age of Heroes

Hesiod's Works and Days

Hesiod's *Works and Days* is the earliest witness of a sequence of eras that includes a specific period of heroes. To trace the history of humankind from a state of paradise to moral degeneration, Hesiod applies the metaphor of metals to characterize different human races and produce a succession of utopian and

23. H. N. Rösel, 'Die Septuaginta-Version des Josuabuches', *SJOT* 16 (2002), 5–23; E. Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2012), 297–8.

24. Saul is among the twenty most popular names, but no Samson or any other figure of the Period of the Judges are attested, except a single Deborah on a Jewish inscription from Beirut in Greek (*CIJ* no. 873): T. Ilan, *Lexicon of Jewish Names in Late Antiquity* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 56, 240.

dystopian eras, from an age of gold, to silver, bronze and iron. The present age of iron appears as wretched, but not hopelessly so.

Humans of the Golden Race (*W&D* 106–26) lived like gods, feasting without cares, free from aging and sorrows. The land gave its fruits without toil. Death came like sleep. The physical appearance and the morality of humans of the Silver Age were inferior (*W&D* 127–42). They remained like children in their maternal house for 100 years,[25] but then lived for a short period when they suffered because of their folly. They ate grain and committed crimes against one another, but, in contrast to later ages, they did not engage in warfare. When Zeus came to power after Cronos, they did not sacrifice to the new Olympian gods. For this reason, Zeus removed them from the earth.

Bronze Age humans engaged in deeds of war. In hubris, they were worse than those of the Silver Age (*W&D* 143–55). They were meat eaters; their minds and bodies were fierce; they used weapons, houses, and tools of bronze; they killed each other off, going nameless to Hades. At this point, Zeus created a better race, the heroes or demigods of the Heroic Age (*W&D* 156–73). Most heroes also engaged in evil war and dreadful battles to gain sheep or women, 'trivial stakes in the eyes of many Greeks'.[26] These heroes died accordingly at Thebes and at Troy, except a few who escaped death and were transported to the Islands of the Blessed.[27]

Finally, the present age of iron is characterized by never-ending sufferings, in total contrast with the Golden Age (*W&D* 174–201). Compared to the century-long childhood of humans of the Silver Age, childhood in the Iron Age is gradually shrinking, and when babies are born with grey temples, it will signal that Zeus is about to destroy this race.

The metallic ages are not attested before Hesiod. They are probably a Greek adaptation of earlier Eastern myths involving successive cycles. The closest parallel is the Zoroastrian division of the world-period into four periods covering a total of 12,000 years, but it is most probably a later application of an older Babylonian paradigm, such as the sequence of five periods attested back in the second millennium BCE Song of Atrahasis: a first period of perhaps 2,500 or 3,600 years, prior to the creation of mankind, is followed by three subsequent periods of 1,200 years each, and finally by a fifth ongoing period after the creation of the present world.[28]

As the heroes interrupt the series of metallic ages, it is likely that the series is pre-Hesiodic. Had Hesiod himself introduced the metals, he would have had

25. Compare Shem, Ham and Japheth, born when Noah was 500 years old, and who were 100 years old during the Flood.
26. G. W. Most, 'Hesiod's Myth of the Five (or Three or Four) Races', *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society* 43 (1997), 104–27 (118).
27. *Ibid*., 123–4.
28. L. Koenen, 'Greece, the Near East, and Egypt: Cyclic Destruction in Hesiod and the Catalogue of Women', *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 124 (1994), 1–34 (20–21).

no reason to avoid a metallic identifier to the race of heroes.[29] Hence, Hesiod's contribution seems to reside in the insertion of the race of heroes between the bronze and iron races. The aim of the insertion was to interrupt the series of degenerating ages. Eager to convince his brother Perses and other people to act righteously, and to work hard rather than making a fortune by crooked means, Hesiod refrained from picturing a constantly degenerating world. Had he considered the Age of Iron as a low point during which things could not possibly get better, there would have been no point in urging people to improve their behaviour.[30]

Therefore, although the activities of the epic heroes on earth is characterized as 'evil war' and the 'horrible cry of battle', the Age of Heroes is 'more just and superior' (*W&D* 158) than the preceding one. Indeed, the only source of their fame resides in their military exploits. They fought over futile matters such as the flocks of Oedipus and fair-haired Helen. The bloodbaths they caused during their career hardly enhances their heroism. Yet, Hesiod's bleak description of the lot of the heroes of traditional epic is mitigated by the mention of the happy few who gained a post-mortem semi-divine existence at the ends of the earth (*W&D* 168–72). The influence of heroes on human affairs was also discussed by Herodotus (2.45; 8.109), who used the Heroic Age as an essential chronological anchor. Herodotus conceived the Heroic Age as a specific period of time approximately eighty-eight years before his own time, or around 1200 BCE, which corresponds to the breakdown of Mycenaean civilization, perceived as cataclysmic. Like Hesiod's heroes, those of Herodotus stand between gods and humans. They:

> are beings on the cusp between myth and history; they lived in the Heroic Age, which was conceived of as occurring at the very end of the *spatium mythicum,* but they were also considered the actual ancestors of families alive in the present, ancestors who had lived at a definite time in the past. They thus look both backwards towards myth and forwards into history … these heroes were not simply human beings like those of the fifth century, who happened to have lived in a definite period of the past; they were not merely ancestors who were no different from grandparents or great-grandparents except in having lived longer ago. Rather, they were envisaged as having been greater than contemporary people and as having had unusual and sometimes fabulous powers.[31]

The myth of the human races was Plato's favourite Hesiodic passage.[32] In the *Republic* (414b–415c), Socrates depicts it as a 'noble lie', a useful fiction to

29. *Ibid*., 25.
30. Most, 'Hesiod's Myth'.
31. E. Vandiver, *Heroes in Herodotus: The Interaction of Myth and History* (Frankfurt am Main 1991), 14.
32. J. H. Haubold, 'Shepherd, Farmer, Poet, Sophist: Hesiod on His Own Reception', *Plato and Hesiod*, G. R. Boys-Stones & J. H. Haubold (eds) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 11–30 (23).

urge individuals to lead an ethical life. As classical authors, Hesiod, Herodotus and Plato were on the Hellenistic curriculum. The Third Book of the Sibylline Oracles (140 BCE?) fuses Hesiod's *Theogony* with Genesis. Josephus' statement (*Contra Apionem* 1.16) that Acusilaus corrected Hesiod in many points is another clue to the popularity of Hesiod among educated Jews. At about the same time in Rome, Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (1.89–150) tells a scheme similar to Hesiod's five ages, but with a significant difference. Ovid omits the Heroic Age and replaces it with the Blood Age, which occurs after the Iron Age (*Metam*. 1. 136–43). Nevertheless, the Race of Heroes was not entirely forgotten. They are mentioned by Catullus (64.383–408) and Virgil *Eclogues* 4.

In the Hebrew Bible, the metallic ages are reflected in Nebuchadnezzar's dream of a huge statue, composed of four metals: gold, silver, bronze and iron, and a mixture of iron and clay for the feet (Daniel 2).[33] The Hellenistic date of Daniel is coherent with the Hellenistic date of Sirach and Nehemiah, the earliest indisputable attestations of the Period of the Judges (see above). I suggest that the influence of the metallic ages of the Greeks extends to the formation of the Period of the Judges.

Hesiodic influences on the framework of the Period of the Judges

Before pointing out the similarities between the age of the Greek heroes and the period of the biblical heroes, it is important to underline the difference between the Book of Judges itself and its integration as the days of the judges, along with the Book of Ruth, in the sequence of periods illustrated by the Historical Books of the Greek Bible.

While Judges 1:1; 2:6-9 mention Joshua to set the stories of the saviours and judges after the conquest of Canaan, the final chapters set them before the time of Samuel with a refrain about the absence of kings 'in those days' (Judg. 17:6; 18:1; 19:1; 21:25). In isolation from Judges 1–2, the days without kings in the refrain could equally refer to the days after the fall of Samaria and of Jerusalem. Apart from the chapters that frame them, the stories of the heroes of the Book of Judges are not anchored in any particular period of Israel's past. They belonged to what ethnology calls the 'floating gap', the time between the far-off island of knowledge of the remote past and the present.[34]

Othniel as paradigm A series of links fills in the gap and anchors the judges in the pre-monarchic past in a way similar to how Herodotus set the heroes in the transition between the mythical past and his present. Othniel, the sole Judean hero in the entire book, introduces the series of twelve figures, at the end of the section omitted by the Greek addition mentioned above (Judg. 3:8-11). As Caleb's nephew, Othniel establishes a last tie with the Book of Joshua and sets himself as the worthy successor of the two spies who did not bring back a slan-

33. Koenen, 'Greece', 12; P. Niskanen, *The Human and the Divine in History* (London: T&T Clark International, 2004), 27–34.

34. J. Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History* (London: James Currey, 1985), 23–4.

derous report about Canaan (Num. 13:32). In this sense, Othniel is a valid model for every Israelite generation living in Canaan ever after.

Compared to Ehud, Othniel's defeat of the mighty Cushanrishathaim, a likely hint to a formidable Nubio-Assyrian coalition, is an act of true statesmanship, devoid of the treachery and scatological elements of the murder of Eglon (Judg. 3:19-23). Jael's murder of Sisera is equally treacherous, except that eroticism replaces scatology. Compared to Othniel, Barak's heroism is marred by his refusal to confront Sisera without Deborah at his side (Judg. 4:8). Compared to the series of skirmishes and killings of Israelites by other Israelites in the stories of Gideon, Jephthah and Samson, the forty years of rest obtained through Othniel's single and decisive battle sets him above the other figures of the book, as though the writer were setting up two distinct categories of heroes. On the one hand, there are figures of dubious heroism like Barak, Gideon, Jephthah and the minor judges, or Samson who fought over futile matters and failed to deliver his people. On the other hand, there is Othniel, whose story lacks the vivid details that characterize epic stories. Surely the writer could have integrated or imitated some of the mighty deeds that were transmitted in Judean catalogues of heroes such as 2 Samuel 21:15-22 for the portrayal of the single Judean judge, but was he trying to rival with the stories of Israelite heroes?

Although the few verses devoted to Othniel are a patchwork of the structural elements of the judges stories, the very dryness and concision of Judges 3:7-11 sets Othniel apart from the other figures of the book, and makes him the real hero of the story. The Othniel model even applies to the kings of Israel and Judah, who engaged in constant warfare with their neighbours or with each other, and were not often successful. Hence, Othniel's relation with his successors fits the Hesiodic model with some flamboyant figures who died in war and a few who ended up on the Island of the Blessed. Does Hesiod's insistence that the age of the heroes was better than the Bronze Age apply to Othniel too?

Compared to Caleb, Othniel was at least as successful as his uncle. With a victory over Cushanrishathaim, king of Mesopotamia, Othniel is on an equal footing with Joshua. Othniel's heroic stature appears even greater than Joshua's, when the lingering issue of the incomplete conquest of Canaan, which characterizes the second part of the Book of Joshua and the first chapter of Judges, is taken into consideration. With Othniel at the head of the series, the heroes of Judges 3–5 represent as good an age, if not a better one, than the age of Joshua viewed as the Hesiodic Bronze Age.

What made Hesiod's age of the heroes better than the Bronze Age was the moral responsibility that the heroes faced. Unlike the three races that preceded them, the Hesiodic heroes had individual destinies. They were the first ones who made individual choices, lived according to different models of behaviour, and ended up with various outcomes.[35] This aspect is at work in the body of Judges where, compared to the rather flat portrayal of Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah and Barak, the more complex figures of Gideon, Jephthah and Samson are faced with unique decisions fraught with serious consequences. As the most

35. Most, 'Hesiod's Myth', 117.

one-dimensional figure of the book, Othniel does not function in this way. Rather, the identification of the audience with the judges as a whole is enhanced by the statement that Othniel died (Judg. 3:11), contrary to the next biblical heroes, whose deaths are not recorded. There is no hint that Ehud, Shamgar, Jael and Barak were taken to the Island of the Blessed, and Othniel's death notice works in the opposite direction than Hesiod's worthy heroes. It shifts the figures of the Book of Judges away from mythical heroes of the past, to bring them closer to the audience. Hence, through Othniel, the distinction between the time of the judges and the present is blurred, as is the case in *Works and Days*, where Hesiod stressed the similarities between the heroes and his own age, in order to set the heroes as models of moral choice which Perseus and Hesiod's generation might choose to emulate or to avoid. The readers of the biblical chronography would surely not achieve a success as extraordinary as that of Othniel; but, inspired by the model he and the first judges offer, a Jewish Hellenistic audience could hope to escape the fate of those who destroyed each other in war or made the wrong choices at crucial times.

Continuity through Eli and Samuel As much as Othniel's death notice fosters the audience's identification with the heroes, the portrayal of Eli, Samuel and his sons on the other side of the Period of the Judges reinforces the continuity of the biblical heroes with the present. The last judges of Israel (1 Sam. 4:18; 7:6; 8:1) faced the same moral choice, if they were to avoid the utter destruction that marks the last biblical heroes: Jephthah ,who killed his only child and thus died without a descendant, and Samson, who committed suicide and died childless. The wickedness of the sons of Eli was fatal to the entire family. The wickedness of Samuel's sons resulted in the establishment of kingship in Israel (1 Sam. 8:5), an institution that faced its holders with the same moral choices as the judges. Good kings delivered their people from external threats, whereas the idolatry of Solomon and the sin of Jeroboam caused endless suffering. There is no need here to decide whether the presentation of Eli and Samuel as judges was modelled after the heroes of the Book of Judges, or whether they were the models on which the figures of Judges were portrayed. I am content to point out that Hesiod's presentation of the Heroic Age and the biblical heroes of the Period of the Judges share the same ambivalence that also characterizes Boaz and Naomi in the Book of Ruth.[36] Noth used the similarity between Judges and the other books of the Former Prophets as evidence of the activity of a single historian. In light of the lateness of the attestations of the Period of the Judges, and in light of the use of the epic heroes by Hesiod, Herodotus and Plato as the prelude to the present age, it is the Period of the Judges that gave coherence to the biblical historiography by bridging the *spatium mythicum* of the ancestors with the present. After this overview of the function of the Period of the Judges as a whole, I focus on the final chapters of the Book of Judges.

36. Ruth 4 describes how Boaz and Naomi tricked Peloni. See my *Land, Credit and Crisis* (Sheffield: Equinox, 2012), 82–9.

Dan and the Danaids In the section on the Peloponnesian War, Thucydides 1.12 records migrations of people, which caused major unrest in the aftermath of the return from Troy. Were Judges 20–21 the biblical equivalent of the war of Troy, the migration is that of the Danites, and it occurs before rather than after the war. In Judges 17–18, the tribe of Dan migrates from the region of Samson's feats (Judg. 13:1) to the city of Dan.

Nadav Na'aman suggests that elements in the outline of the story of the migration of the Danites were borrowed from a Greek legend similar to the founding story of Massalia by the Phocaeans transmitted in Strabo's *Geography*, IV, 1, 4.[37] The similarities between the cultic image and the priestess taken along by the Phocaeans, and the teraphim and the Levite taken from Micah's house (Judges 17–18), is indeed striking. Na'aman suggests an early fifth-century BCE date for these chapters, on the basis of a possible allusion of Manasseh, the priest who defected from Jerusalem to serve at the temple of Gerizim under the patronage of Sanballat (Josephus, *Antiquities* XI, 302–12). Aware that the story of the migration of the Phocaeans is not mentioned by authors earlier than first-century CE Strabo, Na'aman admits that the assumption that the founding legend of Massalia was known in Palestine half a millennium before Strabo is problematic. The temporal gap disappears when the composition of Judges 17–18 is placed in the Hellenistic era, as part of the transformation of the Book of Judges (and Ruth) into chapters of the Period of the Judges. Another difficulty noted by Na'aman is the difference in genres. The legend of the foundation of Massalia displays none of the polemical aspects of Judges 18, where the moulding of a cultic object with silver stolen from one's own mother (Judg. 17:1-5) is the backdrop for the hiring of the Levite to serve as priest in Micah's house. The ensuing theft of both the priest and the cultic image by the migrating Danites leads the reader to doubt the wisdom of Micah's statement: 'Now I know that YHWH will prosper me, because the Levite has become my priest' (Judg. 17:13). While the polemical tone of the final chapters of Judges is absent from the foundation myth of Massalia, it is present in another Greek legend, the Danaids.

Like the biblical Danites, the Danaids were marginal ancestors, 'the strangest heroes imaginable. They are not constituent members of a *polis*: quite the reverse. First, they are females, second they are strangers, even "niggers" … thirdly, they kill their bridegrooms …'[38] Danaus, their father, has fifty daughters, and his brother Aegyptus has fifty sons. The two brothers arrange the marriage of their sons and daughters with their cousins, but Danaus' daughters kill their cousins on the wedding night and invent the *pentekonter*, the ship of fifty oars, to escape from Egypt after the murder. In Judges, elements of the myth of the Danaids are found before chapter 17.

37. N. Na'aman, 'The Danite Campaign Northward', *Vetus Testamentum* 55 (2005), 47–60; P. Wajdenbaum, *Argonauts of the Desert* (Sheffield: Equinox, 2011), 229–31.
38. C. Auffarth, 'Constructing the Identity of the *Polis*: the Danaids as "Ancestors" ', *Ancient Greek Hero Cult*, R. Hägg (ed.) (Stockholm: Distributor: Åström Förlag, 1999), 39–48 (42).

The *pentekonter* motif is reflected in Deborah's jibe against Dan, who abides with ships instead of joining the other tribes against Sisera (Judg. 5:17), and in the abundant progeny that characterizes three of the five 'minor judges'. Jair had thirty sons who rode on thirty donkeys (Judg. 10:3-4). Ibzan of Bethlehem, another 'minor' judge, sent his thirty daughters outside and brought in for his sons from outside (Judg. 12:9). There is no doubt that this terse note means, as the translations render it, that Ibzan 'sent his thirty daughters *in marriage outside his clan* and brought in *thirty young women* from outside for his sons' (NRSV). Abdon, the last minor judge, is graced with forty sons and thirty grandsons (Judg. 12:14). Hence, at least ten of Abdon's sons fathered no sons, while the others only produced a single one. There is no mention of any mass murder in Judges 12, but the net loss with which the series of prodigiously fertile figures closes makes much sense, when read as hints to a myth similar to that of the Danaids.

The sequel of the myth has Hypermnestra, one of Danaus' fifty daughters, spare her husband Lynceus, because he respected her desire to remain a virgin. In Judges 19, the story of the rape of the Levite's concubine reverses the motif. Hypermnestra the heroine becomes the victim, and thus deprives the Levite of a dynasty like the Argive dynasty Hypermnestra and Lynceus began. These parallels and mirror images of the myth of the Danaids support the notion that the migration of the Danites is the biblical counterpart of Thucydides' migrations in the aftermath of the return from Troy. The link with Troy leads to a consideration of the war in final chapters of Judges.

Cherchez la femme In his proem, Herodotus characterizes Troy as the conclusion of a series of abductions and counter-abductions of women (Io, Europe, Medea and finally Helen). The Book of Judges concludes with the abduction of Micah's Levite (Judg. 18), the rape of a Levite's wife (Judg. 19), the revengeful slaughter of Benjamin by the other Israelite tribes, the slaughter of Jabesh-Gilead to find suitable spouses for the Benjaminite survivors, and finally the abduction of the dancers of Shiloh to make up for the missing brides (Judg. 20–21). For Herodotus, the rapes establish the origin of the enmity between Greeks and Persians. In Judges, they illustrate the enmity between Judeans and Benjaminites, Jerusalem and Bethel, and more broadly, between Judeans and Israelites. Hesiod juxtaposed images of utopian and dystopian cities:

> Those who give straight judgement to foreigners and fellow-citizens and do not turn aside from justice at all. Their city blooms and the people in it flower… For these the earth bears the means of life in abundance, and on the mountains the oak tree bears acorns on its surface, and bees in its centre; their woolly sheep are weighted down by their fleeces… But those who care only for evil outrageousness and cruel deeds, far-seeing Zeus, Cronos' son, marks out justice. Often even a whole city suffers because of an evil man who sins and devises wicked deeds. (*W&D* 225–37; 232–4; 238–40)[39]

39. Quote from H. Van Noorden, 'Hesiod's Races and Your Own', *Plato and Hesiod*, G. R. Boys-Stones & J. H. Haubold (eds) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 178–99.

In Judges 19–21, the theme of the whole city that suffers because of an evil man becomes a whole tribe suffering because of an evil gang within one city. The event that sparks the crisis is the gang rape of the Levite's concubine by men of Gibeah. In Hesiod and Plato, a natural catastrophe follows the disastrous war by which Zeus brings about the end of the heroic world (Plato, *Critias* 111a).[40] There is no natural catastrophe in Judges 20, but the war is depicted as disastrous, for Benjamin as well as for Israel as a whole. It is only at the third attack that Israel gains the upper hand. Despite proper cultic preparation involving inquiring about YHWH's will (Judg. 20:18), the Israelites lose 22,000 men in the first battle against Benjamin. Despite YHWH's explicit command to go up again against Benjamin (Judg. 20:23), the second encounter results in a further loss of 18,000 elite Israelite warriors, as though, besides punishing Benjamin, YHWH was seeking to cause much damage in the rest of Israel.

In the parallel account of the capture of Ai, the initial setback is caused by the sin of Achan (Joshua 7). Similarly, the disastrous campaign launched at the instigation of Samuel (1 Sam. 4:11), in which 34,000 Israelites are killed in two successive battles, are clearly the result of the deity's anger with Eli's sons (1 Sam. 2:12-17).[41] Not so in Judges 20, where no sin tarnishes the behaviour of the non-Benjaminite side, which nevertheless suffers two resounding defeats. A rationale for this unique feature is found in the concluding fragment of the *Catalogue of Women* (204 MW), attributed to Hesiod. In these poorly preserved lines, Zeus seems to be planning to destroy a large part of humankind with the *prophasis*, an ambiguous word meaning 'pretext', 'excuse' or 'motivation', of putting an end to the demigods.[42] YHWH's *prophasis* explains why he urges the Israelites against the Benjaminites. YHWH's behaviour makes sense when the Israelites of the Period of the Judges on both sides are viewed as the remnants of the race of the *Nephilim* of Genesis 6 and of the *Anakim* that remained in Gaza, Gath and Ashdod after the conquest (Josh. 11:22).[43]

It is true that, apart from Samson, no one in *Judges* bears the characteristics of demigods who lived in the land in the days before the Flood *and even after* (וגם אחרי כן, Gen. 6:4). Yet, the narrator does not shy from presenting the Benjaminites in a greater-than-life manner. A total of 26,000 Benjaminite warriors, among them 700 left-handed slingers who could aim at a hair and not miss, twice defeat a total of 400,000 Israelites (Judg. 20:15-17). Once slain, the Benjaminites warriors are still deemed courageous fighters (Judg. 20:44, 46). Such an unusual depiction for a vanquished army could obviously be moti-

40. A. Capa, 'Plato's Hesiod and the Will of Zeus', *Plato and Hesiod*, Boys-Stones & Haubold, 200–18 (217–18).
41. S. Frolov, '1 Samuel 1–8. The Prophet as Agent Provocateur', *Constructs of Prophecy in the Former and Latter Prophets and Other Texts*, L. L. Grabbe & M. Nissinen (eds) (Atlanta, GA: SBL, 2011), 77–86 (80).
42. Capa, 'Plato's Hesiod', 214; J. S. Clay, 'The Beginning and End of the *Catalogue of Women* and its Relation to Hesiod', *The Hesiodic Catalogue of Women*, R. I. Hunter (ed.) (Cambrige: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 25–34.
43. The last representatives of the race of heroes are listed in 2 Sam. 21.

vated by the fact that the fallen Benjaminites were nevertheless Israelites. The Hesiodic paradigm, however, opens another perspective.

Both sides are credited with much courage, because this courage is subverted to illustrate an eagerness to go up in arms and slaughter one another. Instead of limiting the punishing campaign to the scoundrels of Gibeah, the Benjaminites refuse to listen to the envoys (Judg. 20:12-13), and the other Israelites are quick to respond with an all-out slaughter in which they lost at least 10 per cent of their numbers and left only 600 Benjaminites alive.[44] In this sense, Judges 20–21 is to Israel what Troy was to the Greeks, the end of the Heroic Age. This is hardly enough to confirm that the placement of the Book of Judges between Joshua and 1 Samuel was inspired by the Hesiodic model. However, the last chapters of Judges, where the Danites, Levites and Benjaminites are the cause of all the trouble, do offer a striking parallel with Thucydides' characterization of the Heroic Age. It was a time of social weakness and lack of common action, when the Greeks accomplished nothing as a group, because of their weakness and lack of contact.

Besides the moral weakness displayed by Micah and the Danites in Judges 17–18, the lack of common action is emphasized by the Danites' decision to emigrate, without any consultation with the other tribes, and the depiction of Laish as without contact with Sidon and Aram (Judg. 18:7).[45] The next chapter plays on the same two registers. For moral decay: the fleeing concubine and her rapists. For the lack of common action: the foolish Levite who sets off too late and refuses to spend the night in Jerusalem (Judg. 19:12).

Why pre-monarchical judges?

Thucydides deprived the Trojan War of much of its heroic gloss in order to show that the Peloponnesian War was of greater magnitude than the Trojan or Persian wars.[46] For Thucydides, the crude affair of Troy dragged on for too long.[47] The notice in Joshua 13:1 that much of Canaan remained unconquered when Joshua was old and advanced in days turns Joshua's conquest into a quagmire. The first chapters of *Judges* reinforce the impression that the conquest was a drawn-out affair. This poses the question of a Judean Thucydides, who had an interest in downplaying Joshua's conquest in order to glorify a more successful conquest.

Apart from a desire to show that the Hebrews had not only kings (contrary to Hecataeus's claim), but heroes as well, and Hebrew heroes were as great as

44. This element is lacking in the parallel account in Gen. 19, where the destruction of Sodom is viewed as an entirely positive act of divine retribution.
45. See also Ephraim's reproach to Gideon for fighting Midian alone (Judg. 8:1).
46. See E. L. Botvie, 'Ancestors of Historiography in Early Greek Elegiac and Iambic Poetry?', *The Historian's Craft in the Age of Herodotus*, N. Luraghi (ed.) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 45–66 (65).
47. G. Crane, *Thucydides and the Ancient Simplicity: The Limits of Political Realism* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998), 127.

Perseus, Theseus or Jason, another reason for the construction of a Period of the Judges would be akin to the motivations of Herodotus (1.1–5) and Thucydides (1.1–21) for writing their histories. Both were struggling to reframe the past and compare the present with earlier conflicts. In the context of the Hasmonean wars, the Period of the Judges relativizes the Neo-Babylonian destructions that the Book of Kings presents as cataclysmic. With a Heroic Age as backdrop for the age of kingdoms, the pro-monarchic refrain underlines the value of kingship compared to the antics of the figures of the Book of Judges, and despite the strongly anti-monarchic bend of the dominant voice in the Books of Judges and 1 Samuel. At the same time, the great deeds of David and Solomon lose their paradigmatic value. Foregrounding kingship rather than a particular dynasty, the institution is freed from its Davidic associations. One could be a legitimate king without any Davidic ancestry. The stress on kingship, as such, fits the Hasmonean agenda and leads to the conclusion that the invention of the pre-monarchic Period of the Judges is far more likely in the second century BCE than in the Neo-Babylonian era.

In the Hasmonean context, Jewish authors such as Eupolemus and Demetrius fitted biblical chronologies into the world chronologies of their Alexandrian colleagues by organizing Israel's past in distinct periods.[48] Although the Hesiodic model could have influenced the biblical writers centuries before the time of the Hasmonean rulers, the Hellenistic era provides a more likely context than the sixth century BCE for the formation of the so-called Deuteronomistic History, complete with a Period of the Judges. I am well aware that the similitudes resulting from the reading of the stories in the Book of Judges as the Israelite version of the Age of Heroes are less striking than the impressive list of close parallels compiled by Philippe Wajdenbaum. In fact, Othniel is the only hero of the Book of Judges about whom no Greek parallels are noted,[49] because the parallelism operates on a more structural level than direct imitation or citation.

48. Jeremy Hughes, *Secrets of the Times: Myth and History in Biblical Chronology* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990), 241–2.
49. Wajdenbaum, *Argonauts*, 214–15.

8

Sex, violence and state formation in Judges 19–21

Anne Katrine de Hemmer Gudme

The Hebrew Bible contains a rather surprising number of rape stories. David's son, Amnon, rapes his half-sister, Tamar, in 2 Samuel 13. Shechem, the Canaanite, rapes Jacob's daughter, Dinah, in Genesis 34. Then there are Lot's two daughters in Genesis 19:29-38, who get their father drunk in order to sleep with him, and in Genesis 39, Joseph is accused of a rape that he has not committed.

In Genesis 19:1-11 there is an account of two angels (מלאכים) who arrive at the city of Sodom in the evening.[1] Abraham's nephew, Lot, sees them and urges them to turn aside (סור) and spend the night in his house. At first, the angels turn down Lot's offer of hospitality and insist on spending the night in the street (ברחוב), but Lot presses them, and they accept his invitation. Once inside the house Lot prepares a feast for his guests and they eat. But the men of the city surround the house and demand that Lot send out his two guests, so that they may have sex (ידע) with them. Lot tries to dissuade them by offering his two virgin daughters in place of his guests, but the men threaten him and press against him. At this point, the two angels intervene and they strike the men outside with blindness. In this way, Lot, his guests and his daughters are all saved from the threats of rape and violence.

A parallel account can be found in Judges 19.[2] It is the unsettling story of a Levite, from the hill country of Ephraim, whose concubine or secondary wife (פילגש) leaves him to go to stay in her father's house in Bethlehem in Judah.[3] After four months, the Levite wants his concubine back, and he travels

1. R. Hendel, C. Kronfeld & I. Pardes, 'Gender and Sexuality', *Reading Genesis: Ten Methods*, R. Hendel (ed.) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2010), 71–91. See *ibid*., 77–87 for a good analysis of Gen. 19:1-11.
2. There is no consensus regarding the interdependence of Gen. 19 and Judg. 19; see S. Lasine, 'Guest and Host in Judges 19: Lot's Hospitality in an Inverted World', *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 29 (1984), 37–59 (38); V. H. Matthews, 'Hospitality and Hostility in Genesis 19 and Judges 19', *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 22, 1 (1992), 3–11 (3), both with references, for various interpretations.
3. For two excellent analyses of Judg. 19, see M. Liverani, 'Messages, Women and Hospitality: Inter-tribal Communication in Judges 19–21', *Studies in Egyptology and*

to Bethlehem to retrieve her. He is welcomed by his father-in-law, who offers him food and drink and hospitality for three days, and then urges him to stay yet another day. Finally, in the afternoon of the fifth day, the Levite departs with his concubine, his servant and his two donkeys. However, they have delayed their departure from Bethlehem too long and are forced to spend the night in a city, instead of continuing on to the hill country of Ephraim. The Levite refuses to enter Jebus, because it is inhabited by foreigners, and they go on to Gibeah in Benjamin, entering the city at sundown. They sit down in the street, and no one in Gibeah approaches them to offer them shelter. Finally, an old man, an Ephraimite and stranger residing in Gibeah, invites the Levite and his companions to spend the night in his house. In the evening, as the old man and his guests enjoy themselves indoors, the house is surrounded by the men of the city. They pound on the door and demand that the old man send out the Levite so that they can have sex with him (ידע). The old man goes out to speak to them and implores them not to commit such a terrible act, as the Levite has come into his house as his guest. He offers them his virgin daughter instead and the concubine to do with as they please, but the men will not listen. In this story, there is no divine intervention. The Levite seizes his concubine and pushes her outside, and the men rape (ידע, התעלל) her all through the night. When they finally let her go, she collapses in front of the old man's house, and dies in front of the door with her hands on the threshold. The next day, the Levite loads his concubine onto his donkey and brings her to his house, where he cuts her body into twelve pieces and sends them to all the Israelite territories, demanding revenge against the Benjaminites.

Although rape and threats of sexual violence are dominant themes in Genesis 19 and Judges 19, most commentators agree that these texts are not, in fact, about sex, but hospitality, a theme which is highlighted by descriptions of outrageous inhospitality, contrasting with exemplary guest-friendship. The story in Genesis 19:1-11 is preceded by the story of Abraham in Mamre in Genesis 18, where Abraham acts as an ideal host, greeting and welcoming three strangers to his tent. Such a scene is also reflected in Lot's reception of the two angels in Genesis 19:1-3. Similarly, in Judges 19, two very elaborate displays of hospitality precede the rape of the Levite's concubine in Gibeah. First, the concubine's father offers a protracted banquet in verses 3-9, and second, the old Ephraimite displays his hospitality in verses 16-22.[4] The hospitality of the Levite's father-

the Ancient Near East: Myth and Politics in Ancient Near Eastern Historiography, M. Liverani, Z. Bahrani & M. Van De Mieroop (eds) (London: Equinox, 2004), 160–92; P. Trible, *Texts of Terror: Literary-Feminist Readings of Biblical Narratives* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1984), 65–92. For a discussion of the translation of פילגש, see M. Bal, *Death and Dissymmetry: The Politics of Coherence in the Book of Judges* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1988), 80–89; S. Ackerman, *Warrior, Dancer, Seductress, Queen: Women in Judges and Biblical Israel* (New York: Doubleday, 1998), 235–6.

4. F. M. Yamada, *Configurations of Rape in the Hebrew Bible: A Literary Analysis of Three Rape Narratives* (New York: Peter Lang, 2008), 72–86.

in-law borders on parody, as his constant invitations to stay on in Bethlehem ends in the fateful late departure on the fifth day, necessitating the catastrophic overnight stay in Gibeah.[5] As both narratives draw towards a dramatic climax, with the threats posed by the men of the city, Lot and the old Ephraimite, both strangers in their respective homes, rise to the pinnacle of hospitality by offering their virgin daughters to a mob at the door. Without doubt, the sacrifice of the daughters is the correct course of action, in these textbook examples of an ideal host. The welfare of male guests is indisputably more important than the virginity of a daughter: not, however, to deny that the sexual integrity of the female members of the household is an extravagant price to pay to preserve that yet greater honour of the unfailing host.[6] The threat of rape posed by the men of the city has not so much to do with homosexuality or sexual desire. It is entirely a dramatic display of inhospitality and xenophobia.[7] By attempting to rape the visitors, the men of the city use sex in a violent humiliation of the strangers. In the patriarchal world to which these texts belong, a man who is penetrated by another is feminized, forced to endure the role of a woman, whereas the supremacy of the penetrating partner is asserted.[8] In Genesis 19, the threat is averted by divine intervention, but in Judges 19, the concubine, a woman belonging to the Levite, is accepted as substitute – probably because hurting the Levite's woman, and thereby his honour as a man, is the next best to raping him.[9]

In both Genesis 19 and Judges 19, the contemptible behaviour of the men of the city serves as provocative cause to the subsequent punishment of the cities: Sodom is destroyed (Gen. 19:24-5), and the other tribes of Israel are called to war against the Benjaminites (Judg. 19:29–20:11).

Another motif that dominates the narrative in Judges 19 is the general atmosphere of chaos and inverted order. The story of the Levite begins with the remark that 'there was no king in Israel' (19:1) in those days (cf. 18:1). This information is a leitmotif, which also appears in Judges 17:6 and 21:25: 'In those days there was no king in Israel. Every man did what was right in his own eyes.'[10] The last five chapters of the Book of Judges, chapters 17–21, differ from the rest of the

5. Liverani, 'Messages, Women and Hospitality', 179–84; V. H. Matthews, 'Hospitality and Hostility in Judges 4', *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 21(1) (1991), 13–21 (14).
6. Liverani, 'Messages, Women and Hospitality', 173; K. Stone, 'Gender and Homosexuality in Judges 19: Subject-Honor, Object-Shame?' *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 67 (1995), 87–107 (92–4); Hendel *et al*., 'Gender and Sexuality', 85–6; *contra* L. M. Bechtel, 'A Feminist Reading of Genesis 19.1–11', *Genesis: The Feminist Companion to the Bible (Second Series)*, A. Brenner (ed.) (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 108–28 (122–5).
7. M. Carden, 'Homophobia and Rape in Sodom and Gibeah: A Response to Ken Stone', *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 82 (1999), 83–96; Bechtel, 'A Feminist Reading of Genesis 19.1–11', 119–20, 128.
8. S. Olyan, '"And with a Male You Shall not Lie the Lying Down of a Woman": On the Meaning and Significance of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13', *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 5 (1994–5), 179–206.
9. Liverani, 'Messages, Women and Hospitality', 172–4.
10. Yamada, *Configurations of Rape in the Hebrew Bible*, 70–72.

book in that they do not repeat the cyclical pattern, where Israel is oppressed by enemies as punishment for sins, before Yahweh raises up a judge to deliver the people.[11] The last part of Judges consists of two main narratives; the story of Micah and the Danites in chapters 17–18, an episode that illustrates the deterioration of the cult, and the story of the rape in Gibeah and the ensuing civil war in chapters 19–21, which depicts social and moral chaos and the disintegration of tribal Israel.[12] The refrain that there was no king in Israel, and that everyone did what they considered to be right, frames these two narratives; in that way, a need for governance is stressed, and the stage is set for the introduction of the monarchy in 1 Samuel 8-12.[13]

Alice A. Keefe has pointed out how the rape of the Levite's concubine in Judges 19, together with two other prominent rape accounts in the Hebrew Bible, the rape of Dinah in Genesis 34 and the rape of Tamar in 2 Samuel 13, function in the narrative as an image of social disintegration at different levels. She has also noted how the rape of a woman in the Hebrew Bible is very often followed by a military conflict.[14] In Genesis 34, Shechem's rape of Dinah precedes a conflict between two neighbouring peoples, the Canaanites and the Israelites, and the sexual encounter in the narrative becomes an image of a cultural encounter.[15] Again in Genesis 34, the encounter and ensuing conflict take place at the international level, people against people, whereas Judges 19 takes place at a national level, tribe against tribe.[16] In 2 Samuel 13, both the rape and resulting conflict are played out within the family, as Amnon rapes his half-sister, who is revenged by her other brother, Absalom.[17] In Keefe's reading of these three rape

11. N. MacDonald, *Not Bread Alone: The Uses of Food in the Old Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 129.
12. Yamada, *Configurations of Rape in the Hebrew Bible*, 70–72.
13. A. D. H. Mayes, 'Deuteronomistic Royal Ideology in Judges 17–21', *Biblical Interpretation* 9, 3 (2001), 241–58; A. Cundall, 'Judges – An Apology for the Monarchy?' *Evangelische Theologie* 81 (1970), 178–81. See the discussion in W. J. Dumbrell, '"In Those Days There Was No King in Israel and Every Man Did What Was Right in His Own Eyes": The Purpose of the Books of Judges Reconsidered', *The Historical Books: a Sheffield Reader*, Ch. Exum (ed.) (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), who argues that the closing refrain in Judg. 21:25 should not be interpreted as a seal of approval, or even apology for the monarchy, but rather as an encouragement to the exiled and kingless people: there was no king then as there is no king now, but Yahweh shall prevail.
14. A. A. Keefe, 'Rapes of Women/Wars of Men', *Semeia* 61 (1993), 79–94.
15. *Ibid*., 79–84.
16. *Ibid*., 85–6.
17. *Ibid*., 86–7. One of Keefe's interesting observations is that the emotional intensity of the narrative increases as the conflict pattern moves from an international conflict over civil war to war within the family. The more heart-breaking the description of the victim's torment, the more disruptive to the social conflict the rape account and the following conflict is perceived to be (*ibid*., 80, 92). See also E. Fuchs, *Sexual Politics in the Biblical Narrative: Reading the Hebrew Bible as a Woman* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), who has some very interesting observations about

narratives, the body of the violated woman functions as a metonym for the social body that is torn by strife. In the case of the Levite's concubine, the woman's body, which is literally dismembered, represents the division between the tribes of Israel.[18] In the present context, it should be noted that the rapes of women in these narratives often mark crucial political events in the history of the people of Israel, such as making a stand against another people with regard to exogamy, the reasons for and justification of civil war and intertribal conflict, and the fight for succession within the royal family.

As mentioned above, the rape of the Levite's concubine results in a civil war between the tribe of Benjamin and the rest of the tribes of Israel. The war is bloody, and in two consecutive battles, the Benjaminites defeat the other Israelite tribes (21:15-25), but on the third day, Yahweh delivers the Benjaminites into the hands of Israel (21:26-45). When the war is over, a new crisis emerges: 25,000 Benjaminite men have been killed in battle (21:46), and the rest of the tribe of Benjamin has been extirpated by the victors, as they burned all the cities and put every living thing in them to the sword (21:48). Only 600 Benjaminite men have survived, hiding in the wilderness. All of the Israelites have sworn never to give their daughters in marriage to a Benjaminite, and therefore the tribe of Benjamin is now in danger of dying out (21:1-6). The Israelites feel sorry for the Benjaminites, and conceive a plan to secure the continuation of the tribe. As it turns out, the inhabitants of Jabesh in Gilead did not heed the call to war in Mizpeh, and therefore the Israelites decide to capture the city and kill everyone in it, except for 400 virgins, who are offered to the remaining Benjaminites as a peace offering (21:7-14). This does not entirely solve the problem, as 200 Benjaminites are still without wives. Again, the solution involves violence and rape. The Benjaminites are encouraged to lie in wait as the young women of Shiloh come out to dance in the vineyards at the annual feast of Yahweh, and each to capture (חטף) a wife there and bring her back to Benjamin (21:19-21). If the fathers or brothers of the captured girls complain (ריב), the Israelites shall intervene on behalf of the Benjaminites, saying that the families ought to accept the alliance, since the girls have not been given away by their fathers and therefore the families incur no guilt (21:22). The plan is carried out and, rather surprisingly, a story that has comprised one gang rape, a civil war and two mass rapes draws to a close with a peaceful and happy ending:

> And they [the Benjaminites] went and returned to their inheritance and rebuilt the cities and lived in them. And the Israelites departed from there at that time,

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the necessity of cancelling out the sister in the line of succession in Gen. 34 and 2 Sam. 13.

18. Keefe makes the point that by using the female body as an image of the social body, the author does not communicate disdain for women and female sexuality, but rather appreciation of the female body, since it is used as a symbol of value (Keefe, 'Rapes of Women/Wars of Men', 92–4). I greatly appreciate Keefe's astute narrative analysis, but I fail to see how these narratives can be read as an appreciation of women.

> every man to his tribe and to his family, and each of them went out from there to his inheritance. (21:23b-24)

In an article from 2007, Robert J. Gnuse draws attention to the many plot similarities between the rape of the women of Shiloh in Judges 21 and the rape of the Sabine women, which is recorded by, among others, Livy and Plutarch, in the first century BCE to the first century CE.[19]

In the Roman myth of the founding of the city of Rome, we encounter the two brothers: Romulus and Remus.[20] The brothers and their followers are building the walls of the city, but the brothers fall out, and Romulus commits fratricide.[21] A while later, a crisis arises in Rome; there is a lack of women, and the Romans find themselves in danger of dying out. First, embassies are sent to the surrounding peoples to ask them to give their daughters as wives to the Romans. However, the request is turned down and another solution must be found. Romulus hatches a plan to invite the neighbouring Sabines to a religious festival and to capture the Sabine women at an appointed time. The plan is carried out and the women, who, according to Plutarch, are all virgins except one, are taken as wives by the Roman men.[22] The Sabines rightly accuse the Romans of violating hospitality, and the rape leads to a military conflict between Rome and the neighbouring peoples led by the Sabines.[23] But in the midst of battle, the Sabine women enter the battlefield 'with loosened hair and torn garments', in a heroic attempt to mediate between the warring parties and to plead with their husbands and fathers to end the fighting. In Livy's version, the women say:

19. R. Gnuse, 'Abducted Wives: A Hellenistic Narrative in Judges 21?', *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* 22(2) (2007), 228–40 (231–2); Livy, *History of Rome, Books I–II* (trans. Foster 1998 [first printed 1919]); Plutarch, *Lives I* (trans. Perrin 1982 [first printed 1914]). The rape of the Sabine women is also recorded by Dionysus of Halicarnassus and others; see H. J. Lundager Jensen, 'Die Frauen der Patriarchen und der Raub der Sabinerinnen. Eine Bemerkung zur Entstehung der Völker und der Struktur der Identität', *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* 1(1) (1987), 104–9 (106).
20. See W. Burkert, *Die orientalisierende Epoche in der griechischen Religion und Literatur* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitätsverlag, 1984), 20–22, who compares the killing of Remus with the killing of Abel as two fratricides that are both related to the founding of cities.
21. Livy, *History of Rome, Book I*: VII; Plutarch, *Lives: Romulus:* X.
22. Livy, *History of Rome, Book I*: IX; Plutarch, *Lives: Romulus:* XV. Plutarch writes about the marital status of the Sabine women: 'And this was the strongest defense which Romulus could make, namely, that they took only one married woman, Hersilia, and her by mistake, since they did not commit the rape out of wantonness, nor even with a desire to do mischief, but with the fixed purpose of uniting and blending the two peoples in the strongest bonds.' Gnuse stresses the similarity between this 'mitigating factor' and the response prepared by the Israelites to the families of the girls in Shiloh in Judg. 21:21; see Gnuse, 'Abducted Wives', 234.
23. Livy, *History of Rome, Book I*, X–XII; Plutarch, *Lives: Romulus*, XVI–XVIII.

> If you regret the relationship that unites you, if you regret the marriage-tie, turn your anger against us; we are the cause of war, the cause of wounds, and even death to both our husbands and our parents. It will be better for us to perish than to live, lacking either of you, as widows or as orphans.[24]

Both the Romans and the Sabines are so moved by the courage and distress expressed by their wives and daughters that they make peace.

In the story of the rape of the Sabine women and the narrative in Judges 19–21, there are several common features. There is the aspect of civil war: in Judges this is the war among the tribes of Israel, whereas in the story of the rape of the Sabine women the civil war is Romulus' fratricide. War is followed by a lack of women and a fear for the survival of the people. In both stories, the solution to the problem is mass rape, which is likely to lead to an intensification of conflict, but surprisingly, the rapes result in reconciliation and peace.

James A. Arieti has pointed out how Livy, in a pattern not dissimilar to that stressed by Keefe in relation to rape accounts in the Hebrew Bible, uses tales of rape to mark important political events in the history of Rome.[25] The rape of Rhea Silvia by Mars results in the births of Romulus and Remus, and the founding of Rome.[26] The rape of the virtuous Lucretia, the wife of Collatinus, by Sextus Tarquinius brings the end of the monarchy and the beginning of the republic.[27] Between these two accounts is the rape of the Sabine women, which leads to the first generation of born Romans and the consolidation of Rome as a viable political entity.[28]

Another interesting parallel to the story in Judges 19–21 can be found in the Egyptian myths about Horus, Osiris and Seth, which can be traced back to the second half of the third millennium BCE.[29] In the earliest material, such as the Pyramid texts, no clear and continuous narrative can be discerned, only sporadic references to the myths of the various gods. A complete narrative can only be found in Plutarch's *De Iside et Osiride*, which was written in the late first to early second century CE.[30]

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24. Livy, *History of Rome, Book I*, XIII: 3; Cf. Plutarch, *Lives: Romulus*, XIX.
25. James A. Arieti, 'Rape and Livy's View of Roman History', *Rape in Antiquity: Sexual Violence in the Greek and Roman Worlds*, S. Deacy & K. F. Pierce (eds) (London: Classical Press of Wales in Association with Duckworth, 2002), 209–29 (218).
26. Livy, *History of Rome, Book I*, 8; Arieti, 'Rape and Livy's View of Roman History', 210–11.
27. Livy, *History of Rome, Book I*, LVII–LX; Arieti, 'Rape and Livy's View of Roman History', 212–13. Arieti also mentions the rape of Roman prostitutes by a group of Sabine men, which precipitates the institution of the dictatorship in Rome, and the attempted rape of the maiden Verginia by the leader of the Decemvirate, Appius Claudius, which results in the dissolution of the Decemvirate; see *ibid*., 214–18.
28. *Ibid*., 218.
29. J. G. Griffiths, *The Origins of Osiris and his Cult* (Leiden: Brill, 1980), 7–8.
30. J. van Dijk, 'Myth and Mythmaking in Ancient Egypt', *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*, J. M. Sasson (ed.), vol. III (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1995), 1697–1709 (1697); J. G. Griffiths, *Plutarch's De Iside et Osiride: Edited with an Introduction,*

The web of interrelated stories that make up the myth of Horus, Osiris and Seth contain the following main storyline: Osiris is murdered by his brother, Seth, who also dismembers Osiris' body and disperses it all over Egypt. Osiris' wife, Isis, gathers the body parts and manages to conceive Osiris' child even after her husband's death.[31] In some earlier accounts, the child born from the posthumous union is Horus, whereas according to Plutarch, it is Harpocrates, Horus-the-Child, who is born prematurely and with weak legs.[32] In an Egyptian text from the fifth century BCE, Isis describes her achievement:

> I am your sister Isis. There is no other god or goddess who has done what I have done. I played the part of a man, although I am a woman, to let your name live on earth, for your divine seed was in my body.[33]

After the death of Osiris, Horus and Seth fight each other, both in court and on the battlefield, over the succession to Osiris' throne. Ultimately, Horus is victorious and he rules as king over Egypt.[34]

The most elaborate account of the battle between Horus and Seth can be found in the Ramesside Chester Beatty Papyrus 1, often referred to as *The Contendings of Horus and Seth*.[35]

Interestingly, an element of the power struggle between Horus and Seth involves an attempted male rape: Seth inserts his erect penis between Horus' thighs, presumably in order to humiliate him and put him in the position of a woman, but Horus catches the semen in his hand and shows it to his mother.[36] Isis then cuts off Horus' hands in order to free him of the taint of Seth's semen, and makes him a new pair of hands. Then she makes Horus masturbate and spreads his semen over the lettuce in Seth's garden. Eating the lettuce, Seth becomes

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Translation and Commentary (Cambridge: University of Wales Press, 1970), 16–18. Another account is written by Diodorus Siculus in the first century BCE, in Book 1 of his *Bibliotheca historica*.

31. According to Plutarch, Isis manages to find all the body parts except the penis, which is eaten by fish. Instead, she fashions a model and consecrates it (Griffiths, *Plutarch's* De Iside et Osiride, 145). According to some Egyptian texts, the penis was successfully retrieved (van Dijk, 'Myth and Mythmaking', 1702).
32. Griffiths, *Plutarch's* De Iside et Osiride, 147; van Dijk, 'Myth and Mythmaking', 1702.
33. P. Louvre 3079, col. 110,10, translated in L. Manniche, *Sexual Life in Ancient Egypt* (London: Kegan Paul, 2002), 59. Cf. Stela C286, 1. 15–16 in the Louvre, which dates to *c*.1400 BCE.
34. In the narrative's present form, the conflict between Seth and Osiris precedes that of the conflict between Horus and Seth, but according to J. Gwyn Griffiths, the Horus-Seth material antedates the Osiris-Seth material; see J. G. Griffiths, *The Origins of Osiris and his Cult* (Leiden: Brill, 1980), 14–15.
35. Griffiths, *The Conflict of Horus and Seth*; Griffiths, *Plutarch's* De Iside et Osiride, 349.
36. Neal Walls, *Desire, Discord and Death: Approaches to Ancient Near Eastern Myth* (Boston, MA: American Schools of Oriental Research), 112; Manniche, *Sexual Life in Ancient Egypt*, 22.

pregnant and gives birth to a golden disc (the moon) through his forehead.[37] In this way, Seth's attempt to feminize Horus by means of a male rape is inverted, and Seth himself is tricked into a woman's subordinate position.[38]

In Hellenistic times, the assembling of Osiris' body was ritually re-enacted at the annual Khoiak festival in the temple at Dendera. At the same festival, Horus was celebrated as the avenger and successor of his father, Osiris. Osiris' forty-two body parts symbolized the forty-two provinces of Egypt, supporting the ritual's stress on the unity and strength of the country.[39] Just like the concubine's body in Judges 19, Osiris' body in the Khoiak ritual functions as a metonym for the social body of all Egypt.[40] However, whereas the concubine's body is dispersed among the tribes of Israel, never to be assembled again, not even when the tribes unite and make peace in Judges 21, Osiris' limbs are united as a powerful symbol of the cohesion of the Egyptian provinces.

Jan Assmann remarks that it is hardly surprising that the Khoiak festival became popular in the Hellenistic and Roman periods, when Egypt experienced increasing fragmentation and repetitive successive subjugation under Assyrians, Persians, Greeks and Romans. In such a situation, the re-enactment of unity becomes an important countermove to the experience of rootlessness and disintegration.[41]

Perhaps a similar rationale can be applied to the narrative in Judges 19–21, so that instead of reading the story as a recommendation or apology for the monarchy, the narrative functions as a celebration, recollecting their unity in a time when the people are threatened with fragmentation in the wake of successive subjugations and defeats.[42]

There are fascinating similarities when Judges 19–21 is read alongside the rape of the Sabine women and the myth of Horus, Osiris and Seth. In Judges 19–21, there are three rapes, the threat of male rape in order to humiliate and subdue another man, a crisis caused by a lack of women, a dismembered body, distributed to the provinces, a civil war and, finally, peace and unity. In the story of the Sabine women, there is fratricide, a crisis caused by a lack of women, rape and, in the end, reconciliation and peace. Finally, in the myth of Horus, Osiris and Seth, there is fratricide, a dismembered body, distributed to the provinces and assembled once again, the threat of male rape in order to humiliate and subdue another man, and finally peace and consolidation, as Horus succeeds his father as king. In the Egyptian myth, no crisis is caused by a lack of women, but

37. van Dijk, 'Myth and Mythmaking', 1704–5.
38. Walls, *Desire, Discord and Death*, 115.
39. J. Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006), 14–16; J. Blach Jørgensen, 'Kollektiv hukommelse sikrer Ægyptens stabilitet og frugtbarhed', *Bibliana* 2012(1) (2012), 16–19.
40. I am very grateful to Francesca Stavrakopoulou, who, in a lecture at the Religious Studies Seminar at the University of Exeter in the spring of 2011, inspired me to work on a combined reading of the narrative in Judg. 19 and the Osiris myth.
41. Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 15–16.
42. *Contra* Mayes, 'Deuteronomistic Royal Ideology in Judges 17–21'.

one related to procreation, as, in some versions, Isis is widowed and childless after Osiris' death, a crisis which is overcome when Isis conceives a child with her deceased husband. Another parallel worthy of mention is that both Judges 19 and the story of the Sabine women use the theme of violence, resulting from an outrageous lack of hospitality.

The narrative of Horus, Osiris and Seth is most explicitly set in a mythic context, but, in reality, all three accounts are lost in a mythic past and all describe an important political turn in the collective memory of the people to whom they belong. In the Egyptian story, it is the stabilization of the monarchy and proper succession; in the Roman story, it is the founding and consolidation of Rome; and in Judges 19–21, it is the unification of the tribes of Israel. In all three, the final state of peace, stability and unity is preceded by chaos, where social structures are torn by fratricide and civil war, rape and humiliation, and gross breaches of common values.

These three stories are far too diverse in language and plot to suggest direct literary dependence between the texts.[43] However, they share a number of motifs related to myths of state formation.[44] Interestingly, all three reflect an understanding that social disorder and chaos come before peace, and sex and violence precede state formation.

43. Cf. Gnuse 'Abducted Wives: A Hellenistic Narrative in Judges 21?'
44. See H. J. M. Claessen, 'War and State Formation: What is the Connection?', *Warfare and Society*, T. Otto (ed.) (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2006), 217–26, who has some interesting observations regarding the relationship between violence and state formation.

9

Israel, the antithesis of Hellas

Enslavement, exile and return in the Greek Solon tradition and the Hebrew Bible

Flemming A. J. Nielsen

Significant parts of the Hebrew Bible revolve around the idea of exile and return; this topos has a noteworthy parallel in the Greek Solon tradition. The renowned statesman probably lived sometime between the second half of the seventh century BCE and the first half of the sixth,[1] but his memory lived on in the Hellenistic world. Among his achievements, according to literary tradition,[2] was the deliverance of Earth and many Athenians from slavery and the repatriation of Attic refugees and slaves who had been sold abroad: the so-called σεισάχθεια, 'shaking off of burdens'. Some of these slaves, it is said, had been living abroad for many years. In the Solon tradition, then, enslavement, exile and return are interconnected concepts, and his text implies that Athenians were enslaved both at home and abroad. The literary tradition's recollections of the disadvantaged Athenians' misfortune and Solon's achievement may be likened to Israel's destiny in the Hebrew Bible where Israel is said to be enslaved and freed in a number of texts. Israel's slavery may take place both in exile and in Yahweh's land. By comparing Solon's σεισάχθεια to this topos in the Hebrew Bible, I hope to elucidate how this tradition may be influenced by Greek tradition, in the sense that Jewish intellectuals probably composed parts of their holy writings in deliberate contrast with important ideas in the expanding Greek civilization.

1. Maria Noussia-Fantuzzi, *Solon the Athenian, the Poetic Fragments*, Mnemosyne Supplements, 326 (Leiden: Brill 2010), 4.
2. All ancient testimonies and fragments are collected in Antonius Martina, *Solon. Testimonia veterum* (Rome: Edizioni dell'Ateneo, 1968). Kathleen Freeman, *The Work and Life of Solon* (London: Humphrey Milford, 1926), 219–25, has a list of 'the chief references to Solon by name in ancient literature'.

The Solon tradition

In the Greek literary tradition, Solon was known as a thinker, poet, legislator, social reformer and originator of the Athenian constitution.[3] From sources dating from the fourth century BCE and later, we possess relatively detailed information about his life. His family boasted of royal blood, but in terms of wealth, they allegedly belonged to the middle class.[4] However, since very little was known about Solon in fifth-century Athens,[5] it seems reasonable to consider much of our information about him to be suspect.[6] It is a well-known fact that many details about Solon's life are inferences drawn from his poems, or invented in the endeavour to connect him with the other great names of his day.[7] We do not know who the actual author of 'Solon's' verses is; they may, in fact, be the product of a tradition of poetry that created the *persona* of an ideal lawgiver.[8]

Many Greek cities of the classical period attributed their laws, or some of them, to archaic legislators. In the wording of Maria Noussia-Fantuzzi,[9] the characterizations of the most ancient of them:

3. Pavel Oliva, *Solon: Legende und Wirklichkeit* (Konstanz: Universitätsverlag, 1988), has a useful survey and assessment of the Solon tradition. More recent is the introduction in Noussia-Fantuzzi, *Solon the Athenian*. As regards the history of research, see Joseph A. Almeida, *Justice as an Aspect of the Polis Idea in Solon's Political Poems: A Reading of the Fragments in Light of the Researches of the New Classical Archaeology* (Leiden: Brill 2003), 1–69. An interesting anthology of recent research is Josine H. Blok & André P. M. H. Lardinois (eds), *Solon of Athens: New Historical and Philological Approaches* (Leiden: Brill, 2006; repr. 2011).
4. Noussia-Fantuzzi, *Solon the Athenian*, 3–8.
5. A. E. Raubitschek, 'Book review: Agostino Masaracchia, *Solone*, Firenze: La Nuova Italia, 1958', *Classical Philology* 58.2 (1963), 137–40, reviews all our sources for the literary Solon tradition. As regards the scarcity of knowledge about Solon in fifth-century Athens, see 138. 'It seems not to have been until the end of the fifth century that Solon came to be regarded as a founding hero of the Athenian democracy' (Peter John Rhodes, 'The Reforms and Laws of Solon: An Optimistic View', *Solon of Athens*, Blok & Lardinois (eds), 248–60, cit. 248). Cf. Eberhard Ruschenbusch, 'ΠΑΤΡΙΟΣ ΠΟΛΙΤΕΙΑ. Theseus, Drakon, Solon und Kleisthenes in Publizistik und Geschichtsschreibung des 5. und 4. Jahrhunderts v. Chr.', *Historia. Zeithschrift für Alte Geschichte* 7 (1958), 398–424. Before 356 BCE, four citations of Solon's laws occur in seventy-five speeches by Attic orators, but after 356, there are thirty-two citations in sixty-four speeches (Noussia-Fantuzzi, *Solon the Athenian*, 20).
6. Noussia-Fantuzzi, *Solon the Athenian*, 3.
7. *Ibid*., 5, quoting Kathleen Freeman, *The Work and Life of Solon* (London: Humphrey Milford, 1926), 179.
8. Edward M. Harris, 'Solon and the Spirit of the Laws in Archaic and Classical Greece', *Solon of Athens*, Blok and Lardinois (eds), 290–318, see 292. Noussia-Fantuzzi, *Solon the Athenian*, 3–77 argues at length that Solon was indeed a historical person, and not only a fictitious character.
9. Noussia-Fantuzzi, *Solon the Athenian*, 19.

> embody a complicated blend of historical facts and invention that served to mythicize the specific legislator, but which also adhered to conventional biographical topoi. These topoi were formed of anecdotes providing evidence of the legislator's virtue and of his travels to learn about other societies; they told of a crisis in his city that needed resolution and described his role as mediator between factions and resolver of the crisis.[10]

The earliest mention of Solon in the ancient literature that has come down to us is Herodotus' famous story about the – probably fictitious[11] – encounter between the Lydian king Croesus and this Athenian sage (Hdt. 1.29–33). Solon tells the unbelieving sovereign that no one, not even a king, should be praised as happy before his death. Herodotus already knew about Solon's poems,[12] and even though the historian briefly mentions Solon's legislation (Hdt. 1.29), he is, above all, represented as a thinker and philosopher, one of all the sages of Greece visiting the Lydian king.[13] Only later in the literary tradition did he become a statesman and originator of a social reform – at least in the sources that have been handed down to us, most importantly Aristotle (fourth century BCE)[14] and later writers such as Diodorus Siculus (first century BCE), Plutarch (first century CE)[15] and Diogenes Laertius (third century CE).

In this literary tradition, he became a sort of culture hero, one of the Pan-Hellenic seven sages.[16] He was remembered as founder of the Athenian democracy, but also as author of a number of poems that were cited by several writers, most notably the said four ones.

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10. As regards legends of great Greek legislators, see Andrew Szegedy-Maszak, 'Legends of the Greek Lawgivers', *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 19(3) (1978), 199–209.
11. Already Plutarch (*Sol.* 27.1) doubted the historicity of Herodotus' anecdote, and it has been discredited by modern scholars primarily for chronological reasons (Noussia-Fantuzzi, *Solon the Athenian*, 11, n. 11).
12. According to Herodotus 5.113, Solon had praised Philocyprus, one of the local tyrants at Cyprus, in a poem. Such a poem is quoted by Plutarch (*Sol.* 26.3–4 = F 19 W./11 G.-P.). When referring to the fragments (by the siglum F) of Solon's poems, I shall use the numberings of both Martin Litchfield West, *Greek Lyric Poetry*, Oxford World's Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) (hereafter W) and the edition of Bruno Gentili & Carlo Prato, *Poetae Elegiaci. Testimonia et Fragmenta.* I, Bibliotheca Teubneriana (Leipzig: Teubner, 1979) (hereafter G.-P.), which is the one adopted by Noussia-Fantuzzi, *Solon the Athenian*.
13. Oliva, *Solon – Legende und Wirklichkeit*, 14, cf. Hdt. 1.29: ἀπικνέονται ἐς Σάρδις ἀκμαζούσας πλούτῳ ἄλλοι τε οἱ πάντες ἐκ τῆς Ἑλλάδος σοφισταί … καὶ δὴ καὶ Σόλων, 'to Sardes, at the height of its wealth, came all the wise men of Hellas … Solon in particular' (my translation). Text quoted from B. A. van Groningen, *Herodotus' historiën met inleiding en commentaar.* II. *Tekst*, Grieksche en latijnsche schrijvers met aanteekeningen, 50 (Leiden: Brill, 1949).
14. Assuming that Aristotle was in fact the author of *Athenaion Politeia*; cf. below.
15. Lukas de Blois, 'Plutarch's *Solon*: A Tissue of Commonplaces or a Historical Account?', *Solon of Athens*, Blok & Lardinois (eds), 429–40.
16. Noussia-Fantuzzi, *Solon the Athenian*, 3–4.

Solon and King Solomon

It seems only too obvious to compare Solon with the sovereign in the Hebrew Bible whose name resembles that of the Greek sage, to wit, King Solomon, also famous for his wisdom and, in the biblical tradition, author of thousands of songs and sayings (1 Kgs 5:9-14).

The differences between the two sovereigns are also obvious: King Solomon was not remembered as a lawgiver, and there is really nothing democratic about the Bible and its heroes. Another obvious difference is the motif of travelling. The Greek sage travels around the world and participates in intellectual exchanges, but King Solomon did not go anywhere; the world came to him (1 Kgs 5:14), as it came to King Croesus in the Greek tradition.[17] Travellers in the biblical tradition are figures such as Abra(ha)m leaving his home because God commanded him to do so (Gen. 12:1), young Saul who was instructed by his father Kish to search for some missing donkeys (1 Sam. 9:3), young David on the run (1 Sam. 19-20), and young Joseph sold and brought to Egypt as a slave (Gen 37:28). Elkanah and his family went on annual pilgrimages to Yahweh's temple (1 Sam. 1:3), Elimelech and his family fled famine in Yahweh's country, and the latter's widow, Naomi, travelled in order to return to Yahweh's country with her widowed daughters-in-law (Ruth 1:1-7). These and numerous other examples show that apart from kings waging war (David: 2 Sam. 8), the biblical persona generally travels by necessity only.

Solon's poetry

Forty-odd fragments are preserved of poems ostensibly written and performed by Solon.[18] They are found in many literary works of antiquity, and a number of verses are found several times. Most of them are cited in Plutarch's biography of Solon and in the *Athenaion Politeia*, 'The Constitution of the Athenians', usually attributed to Aristotle.[19] The kind of poetry represented by those frag-

17. As regards the similarities between the biblical King Solomon and King Croesus in the Greek tradition, see Philippe Wajdenbaum, *Argonauts of the Desert: Structural Analysis of the Hebrew Bible* (Sheffield: Equinox, 2011), 270–74.

18. A recent edition and magisterial commentary of the poetic fragments is Noussia-Fantuzzi, *Solon the Athenian*; her bibliography is exhaustive. A useful English translation may be found in West, *Greek Lyric Poetry*. The most important fragments and translations thereof are printed in Blok & Lardinois (eds), *Solon of Athens*, 457–60.

19. Peter John Rhodes, author of the standard commentary, is sceptical: 'On the evidence which we have, Aristotle could have written this work himself, but I do not believe he did'; P. J. Rhodes, *A Commentary on the Aristotelian* Athenaion Politeia (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993), 63; cf. Hans-Joachim Gehrke, 'The Figure of Solon in the *Athênaiôn Politeia*', *Solon of Athens*, Blok & Lardinois (eds), 276–89; see 287: 'there is no convincing argument against Aristotle's authorship … we are here in the field of believing.' Gehrke (*ibid.*) points out that '[t]he Solon-passages in the *Athêneiôn Politeia* and in the *Politics* are very close to each other in nearly every respect'.

ments are usually called 'lyric' or 'poetry of the present', in contradistinction to epic and tragic poetry, which are focused on the mythical past.[20] It is social poetry intended initially for oral delivery, whether sung or recited, before an audience. Much of Solon's verse is concerned with the public affairs of his city. According to Martin Litchfield West's recapitulation of the ancient testimonies, inequalities between rich and poor had produced a critical situation in Athens. After presenting a series of comments and warnings on the dangers threatening the city in poems that evidently circulated well beyond the confines of a private symposium, Solon summoned a mass meeting, won its support and was given powers to frame special laws to ease the situation. A group of fragments seem to defend Solon's actions against several critics.[21]

His poetry contains a number of wisdom-like motifs resembling Hesiod and the wisdom literature of the Hebrew Bible. Solon has the earliest clear formulation of the *hubris–ate–nemesis* motif that has been preserved in Greek literature,[22] but in the present context, I shall not elaborate on the wisdom theme in Solon's poetry.

Σεισάχθεια and εὐνομία

Prominent in the testimonies about Solon is the so-called σεισάχθεια, 'shaking off of burdens'.[23] According to *Ath*. *Pol*. 5.2 and Plutarch (*Sol*. 14.2), Solon was elected as both Archon and mediator between the people and the aristocrats. In a famous poem (F 4 W./3 G.-P.) Solon commented on the political situation saying that the immortal gods would not destroy the state, but the people would because of their lawless behaviour and avarice. One of the disasters befalling the Athenian state was that many of the poor would 'find themselves in foreign lands, sold into slavery and bound in shameful bonds'.[24]

In the usual way of describing archaic Athens,[25] this and other city-states went through some kind of social crisis in Solon's day. Small farmers were in the power of the old aristocracy, and many were hopelessly in debt and therefore

20. West, *Greek Lyric Poetry*, viii.
21. *Ibid*., xv.
22. F 13 W./1 G.-P.; Holger Friis Johansen, *Fri mands tale: Græsk litteratur indtil Alexander den Stores tid* (Copenhagen: Centrum, 1984), 67.
23. Oliva, *Solon – Legende und Wirklichkeit*, 47–53; Noussia-Fantuzzi, *Solon the Athenian*, 29–44. The term σεισάχθεια is attributed to 'the Athenians' in *Ath. Pol.* 6.1. The testimonies do not clearly ascribe it to Solon, and there is nothing to suggest that the word was ever found in the texts of Solon himself, cf. Noussia-Fantuzzi, *Solon the Athenian*, 31.
24. F 4 W./3 G.-P. 23–5; the translation is that of West, *Greek Lyric Poetry*, 75.
25. Victor Ehrenberg, *From Solon to Socrates. Greek History and Civilization during the 6th and 5th centuries* BC. (London: Methuen, 1968), 54–68; Oliva, *Solon – Legende und Wirklichkeit*, 47–53; Noussia-Fantuzzi, *Solon the Athenian*, 19–44. Translations of the most important *testimonia* in *Ath*. *Pol*. and Plut. *Sol*. are conveniently compiled by Noussia-Fantuzzi, *ibid*., 29–30.

serfs of the rich or slaves. Among Solon's merits was his idea of εὐνομία, 'good order' – the community should be governed by law: κακὰ πλεῖστα πόλει Δυσνομία παρέχει, / Εὐνομία δ' εὔκοσμα καὶ ἄρτια πάντ' ἀποφαίνει, 'Lawlessness brings the city countless ills / while Good Order reveals all that is orderly and appropriate' (F 4 W./3 G.-P. 31–2).

Solon was not the first Greek ruler who committed laws to writing. As a legislator he was preceded by Draco, and Solon's laws would have replaced Draco's (with the exception of laws on homicide),[26] but Solon was remembered for the high quality of his laws. He replaced the old aristocracy by a meritocracy and encouraged fairness and moderation as regards both rich and poor. The Athenians' civil rights should no longer depend on their aristocratic extraction, but on the extent of their properties. With Solon's laws, Athens became a community founded on the rule of law – at least in the literary tradition.

Many aspects of Solon's rule, as it was remembered in the sources that have come down to us, are difficult to interpret. The so-called σεισάχθεια represents but one of those controversial issues:

> συμμαρτυροίη ταῦτ' ἂν ἐν δίκηι χρόνου
> μήτηρ μεγίστη δαιμόνων Ὀλυμπίων
> ἄριστα, Γῆ μέλαινα, τῆς ἐγώ ποτε
> ὅρους ἀνεῖλον πολλαχῆι πεπηγότας,
> πρόσθεν δὲ δουλεύουσα, νῦν ἐλευθέρα.
> πολλοὺς δ' Ἀθήνας, πατρίδ' ἐς θεόκτιτον,
> ἀνήγαγον πραθέντας, ἄλλον ἐκδίκως,
> ἄλλον δικαίως, τοὺς δ' ἀναγκαίης ὕπο
> χρειοῦς φυγόντας, γλῶσσαν οὐκέτ' Ἀττικὴν
> ἱέντας, ὡς ἂν πολλαχῆι πλανωμένους,
> τοὺς δ' ἐνθάδ' αὐτοῦ δουλίην ἀεικέα
> ἔχοντας, ἤθη δεσποτῶν τρομεομένους,
> ἐλευθέρους ἔθηκα.
>
> Let the mightiest, noblest mother of the Olympian gods bear witness when time delivers judgment, dark Earth, from whom I removed pillars that were fixed in many places, slave before, now free. To Athena's divinely created fatherland I brought many people back who had been sold as slaves, one unjustly, another legally, and I set free those who had fled from the constraint

26. Michael Gagarin, 'Legal Procedure in Solon's Laws', *Solon of Athens*, Blok and Lardinois (eds), 261–75; see 270. Solon's predecessor Draco's name means 'serpent', and his laws were of ill repute (Oliva, *Solon – Legende und Wirklichkeit*, 30–35). It would be tempting to compare this figure with another legendary figure of the Hebrew Bible, King Nahash (1 Sam. 11), whose name also means 'serpent'. Draco's reputation of being harsh is due to the fact that he preserved customary laws as regards crimes such as theft and adultery, and thereby endorsed self-help and vendettas.

> of debt – straying in so many places, they no longer spoke Attic – as well as those living in shameful slavery here, trembling at [their] masters' whims.
> (F 36 W./30 G. P. 3–15, my translation)[27]

The lines cited are presented by the ancient sources which preserved them (*Ath*. *Pol*. 12.4–5 and Plut. *Sol*. 15) as evidence of Solon's σεισάχθεια which is taken to mean elimination of debt and liberation from debt slavery (*Ath*. *Pol*. 2 and 6) or liberation from debt slavery and the demolition of pillars, ὅροι, erected on mortgaged property (Plut.). Solon prides himself on having brought back many Athenians who had fled the country because of heavy debt or even had been sold to slavery abroad. Many had stayed abroad for such a long time that they had forgotten their mother tongue altogether.

How should we perceive these lines of poetry? Did Solon really manage to purchase the freedom of a large number of slaves who had been living abroad for many years, perhaps even for generations, given that they had forgotten their native language? How did he track all these people down? How did he provide the capital needed for ransoming hundreds or thousands of slaves at home and abroad? And what became of the former slaves when they returned to their homeland and former properties? What became of the people who owned those properties when the persons released from slavery returned?[28]

Another kind of problem is posed by the objects, ὅροι, that Solon said he removed from Earth in order to free her from slavery. Those objects are usually perceived as a kind of boundary-stone that marked mortgaged land. According to *Ath*. *Pol*. 12.4, followed by Plutarch (*Sol*. 15), Solon cancelled all debts and decreed that no creditor should ever again engage the body of his debtor for security. This would, of course, create massive problems in the real world. However, Plutarch also knew about authors who claimed that Solon did not in fact cancel all debts, but he reduced the interest and thereby eased the economic burdens of the debtors. This is, however, pure speculation, based on an understanding of the word ὅροι which was probably anachronistic. During the fourth century BCE and later, it was customary in Attica to set up stones in order to indicate that the land to which they were affixed had been pledged as security for a debt or other obligation. Such stones were removed upon cancellation of the obligation.[29] If it

27. Text quoted from Noussia-Fantuzzi, *Solon the Athenian*, 116.

28. Cf. Oliva, *Solon – Legende und Wirklichkeit*, 50–52.

29. Edward M. Harris, 'A New Solution to the Riddle of the *Seisachtheia*', *The Development of the Polis in Archaic Greece*, Lynette G. Mitchell & Peter John Rhodes (eds) (London: Routledge, 1997), 103–12, see 104; Josiah Ober, 'Solon and the Horoi: Facts on the Ground in Archaic Athens', *Solon of Athens*, Blok & Lardinois (eds), 441–56, see 446. The Athenian 'mortgages' ὅροι, known from the fourth century BCE, were inscribed stone stelae that recorded various sorts of hypothecation. There is a gap of some 200 years between Solon's archonship and the earliest known hypothecation ὅροι (Moses I. Finley, *Studies in Land and Credit in Ancient Athens, 500–200 BC: The Horos Inscriptions* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1952); John V. A. Fine, *Horoi. Studies in Mortgage, Real Security, and Land Tenure in Ancient Athens* (Baltimore, MD: American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 1951). In the wording of Josiah Ober ('Solon and

were known that Solon had composed a poem in which he asserted that he had removed ὅροι and freed the land from slavery, it would only be natural for the ancient transmitters of this poem to interpret such a statement to mean that he had carried out a cancellation of debts.

While ὅροι were part of the Greek physical and conceptual landscape well before the age of Solon and remained important through the archaic period, it is not at all clear exactly what form and function they had in Solon's days. Based on the pre-classical evidence in existence, Josiah Ober tentatively describes them as 'marker[s] of distinction between this and that',[30] whereas Edward M. Harris simply translates the concept as 'boundary markers'.[31] In Ober's words, 'the *horoi* Solon disestablished had marked some sort of distinction that he regarded as inimical to the fairness-based regime of justice he sought to create for Athens.'[32]

F 37 W./31 G.-P. 8–9 fully demonstrates that Solon was able to use the word ὅρος as a metaphor, even though the metaphor is there marked by ὥσπερ, 'like': ἐγὼ δὲ τούτων ὥσπερ ἐν μεταιχμίωι / ὅρος κατέστην, 'I became like a ὅρος between them'. This and other instances of the use of metaphorical language[33] enables us to read ὅρος as a metaphor in F 36 W./30 G. P. as well. This is what Edward M. Harris does. He even rules out the possibility that this passage may be read literally.[34] This may be carrying the matter too far,[35] since the relationship between Solon's verse and the history of his era and its institutions remains ultimately opaque. Real incidents do not rule out their being used as metaphors in poetry, and poetry is not proof that the incidents treated therein did actually happen. Whatever Solon may have done as a leader,[36] in his verse he removed metaphorical boundary-stones marking the boundary between opposing parties: the poor and the powerful. As a result of violence, Attica had fallen into oppression, strife and bloodshed. The poor were no longer protected by respect for justice and were seized by the powerful and sold into slavery. The enslavement of the poor came about from a breakdown of law and order, not because of economic exploitation of dependent labour in some kind of quasi-feudal system,

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the Horoi', 447), '*horoi* may also have been used in the seventh and early sixth centuries for purposes similar to the hypothecation *horoi* of the fourth century … But there is no strong reason to suppose that they were.'

30. Ober, 'Solon and the Horoi', 447.
31. Harris 'A New Solution to the Riddle of the *Seisachtheia*', 104.
32. Ober, 'Solon and the Horoi', 447–8.
33. Noussia-Fantuzzi, *Solon and the Athenians*, 67–78, outlines Solon's imagery.
34. Harris 'A New Solution to the Riddle of the *Seisachtheia*', 104.
35. Cf. the objections in Ober, 'Solon and the Horoi', 446–7.
36. Ober (*ibid*.), has some interesting suggestions, interpreting the ὅροι removed by Solon quite materially and comparing them to later edifices such as the Great Wall of China, the Berlin Wall and the present 'security barrier' built by the Israeli government in order to divide the Israeli and Palestinian populations. All these walls were constructed in order to create hard 'facts on the ground'.

says E. M. Harris.[37] In this situation, Solon was proud of his success in unifying the people of Attica after it had been divided into different factions.

Irrespective of the proper understanding of the details of the σεισάχθεια, it was epoch-making as regards the future development of the Athenian society. The poorest inhabitants were freed from their dependence of the former aristocracy, and a civil society began to develop. It is usually maintained that the reform was a crucial step in the long transition from the aristocratic society of the early archaic period in Greece to the democratic society of the classical period, even though there is little agreement about the nature of the reform.[38]

It seems that the σεισάχθεια was the abolition of payment for protection money to local lords. E. M. Harris offers several parallels for such a system in the Homeric poems, Hesiod, contemporary Attica and fifth-century Thrace.[39] According to Harris, Solon's reform ought to be seen in the political context as an attempt to weaken the regional leaders who dominated the Attic countryside. This corresponded to Solon's attempt to strengthen the powers of the elected officials and the formal institutions operating in the centre of Attica in Athens. Solon was attempting to combat the centrifugal tendencies of elite competition which led to dissension in the countryside, as described in his poems. He was not really an economic reformer concerned with the problems of land tenure and agricultural conditions.

A literal understanding of Solon's boast that he had repatriated many Athenians who had been forced into exile, is difficult for the reasons stated, since such an achievement seems to entail insurmountable practical difficulties. I suggest that we read Solon's statement of the abolishment of slavery and the repatriation of exiles as metaphors. We don't know much about the realities behind those metaphors. Central to Solon's description of his achievement is the Athenians' fate before and after his legislation: under δυσνομία, lawlessness, many Athenians were slaves, some even exiles. Under Solon's εὐνομία, lawfulness, *all* Athenians were free and happy.

Exile and slavery in the Hebrew Bible

The Solonian topos of σεισάχθεια and εὐνομία may be compared to the texts in the Hebrew Bible where Israelites are said to be enslaved at home or abroad. Knowledge of Solon's εὐνομία may be contrasted with knowledge of Yahweh's lordship: knowledge of one's position as Yahweh's slaves is the ultimate freedom.

In the Hebrew Bible, the idea that the Israelites are Yahweh's slaves (Lev. 25:42) is basic, and the difference between serving Yahweh and 'the kingdoms of the earth' is profound (2 Chron. 12:8). To be Yahweh's slave is quintessentially to be free; there is no inconsistency between this kind of enslavement and Jeremiah's rhetorical question: העבד ישראל, 'is Israel a slave?' (Jer. 2:14). This

37. Harris, 'A New Solution to the Riddle of the *Seisachtheia*', 105–6.
38. *Ibid*., 103.
39. *Ibid*., 108–11.

is why Judeans should never be reduced to slaves of other people (Jer. 34:8-17; 2 Chron. 28:10; Neh. 5:1-13). Well known is the law of Hebrew slaves that must be set free after six years without compensation to the (human) owner (Exod. 21:2; Deut. 15:12). However, Jeremiah accuses the Israelite people of refusing to be Yahweh's slave (Jer. 2:20), hence their ill fortune, although it is only temporary (Jer 31:27-34). In the Book of Ezekiel, Yahweh will save his people from slavery, and his blessing will bring along prosperity and knowledge (Ezek. 34:27). This seems to be the purpose of the biblical course of events; cf. Exodus 6:7: וידעתם כי אני יהוה אלהיכם, 'you will know that I am Yahweh, your God'. According to Isaiah, the House of Israel (בית ישראל) is even bound to turn the foreign nations – their former masters – into their slaves (Isa. 14:2).

However, in the Hebrew Bible, slavery is not frequently associated with exile. Such biblical statements may be organized around four themes, as follows.

(1) Egypt

Most slavery-in-exile statements belong in this group. In the Exodus story (Exod. 1–15), the Israelites enslaved are part of the Egyptian tragedy: The thing that should be prevented – the increase of the Israelite population (Exod. 1:10) – is brought out by the very actions that should prevent it (1:12). The enslavement is part of the Israelite ethno-genesis, and deliverance is deliverance to a life in Yahweh's country under Yahweh's guidance and blessing. The story is etiological: this is how the Israelite people came into being, and this is how they became Yahweh's slaves (Lev. 25:42). The purpose of the story is knowledge (Exod. 6:7) and to introduce the legislation at Sinai (Exod. 19–Num. 10). The Israelites properly belong to Yahweh. At the same time, exile and slavery are, paradoxically, the avenue to wealth (Gen. 15:13-14; Exod. 3:21-2; 12:35-6). Quite a few Deuteronomistic texts remind the reader that Yahweh brought his people out of Egypt, the house of bondage,[40] and the long series of curses befalling the disobedient people (Deut. 27–28) culminates in the threat that Yahweh will repeat the Egyptian exile where no locals will spend even a farthing on Israelite slaves eagerly offering themselves for sale (Deut. 28:68). In Nehemiah 9:17, the Israelites decided to return to slavery in Egypt, which may be read as a peculiar version of the nostalgia of Exodus 16:3; cf. Numbers 11:5, where the people miss all the good things in Egypt.

(2) Babylon

Whereas the Deuteronomistic History and the Tetrateuch associate slavery with the Egyptian exile, one statement in Chronicles (2 Chron. 36:20) links the enslavement of Yahweh's people with the Babylonian exile as the king of the Chaldeans (cf. v. 17) exiles the 'rest' of the Israelites to Babylon and makes slaves of them. It is also said that this deplorable situation was only temporary.

The temporariness is confirmed in Jeremiah 25 and 27. According to Jeremiah 25:8-14, Yahweh's land will be devastated by Yahweh's servant, the king of

40. Deut. 5:6, 15; 6:21; 7:8; 8:14; 13:6, 11; 15:15; 16:12; 24:18, 22; cf. Josh. 24:17; Judg. 6:8; Jer. 34:13; Mic. 6:4.

Babylon, and Yahweh's people will be enslaved to the king of Babylon for seventy years. After the seventy years, the king of Babylon and his people will be punished and enslaved themselves. Jeremiah 27:7 even says that 'all peoples', כל הגוים, will be slaves of the king of Babylon until the turn of his own land comes and he himself will be subjugated by many peoples and great kings. However, in Jeremiah 27:11 and 17 it becomes clear that being slaves of the king of Babylon, according to the prophet, is the means of remaining in Yahweh's land. Refusal of being slaves will cause Yahweh to kill (27:13) and expel (27:15) his people. This enslavement is likened to an iron yoke that Yahweh has put upon the necks of his own people, 'all these nations', and even the wild beasts (28:14). This same yoke reappears in Deutero-Isaiah (Isa. 47:6), who accuses 'Maiden Chaldea' (בת כשדים, cf. v. 5) of taking advantage of Yahweh's being angry at his people. The deity entrusted his people to Maiden Chaldea, but she only put her heavy yoke upon them, which obviously implies enslavement. But in Deutero-Isaiah, it seems that the yoke is that of the king of Babylon, not Yahweh's, and the context of Deutero-Isaiah obviously is the Babylonian exile, whereas Jeremiah's perspective is the people remaining in Yahweh's land. From Jerusalem, the prophet even writes a letter to the exile community in Babylon (Jer. 29) in order to recommend that they settle for the good life there (29:5-7). In the Book of Jeremiah, only the people remaining in Yahweh's land are referred to as slaves of the king of Babylon, not the exiles.

(3) Other nations

Babylon is not alone in Jeremiah 25:9 but is joined by all the peoples of the north in subjugating Yahweh's people and the surrounding peoples. Likewise, according to Nehemiah 9:36-7, Yahweh's people are slaves of foreign kings that Yahweh has set over them because of their sins. Those kings are Persian, according to Ezra 9:9. As was the case with Babylon, the other nations are also subject to Yahweh's punishment. They will be plundered by those whom they enslaved (Zech. 2:13) and be slaves themselves (Isa. 14:2).

(4) The unknown land

Yahweh will commit his people to slavery in an unknown land because he is angry, says Jeremiah: והעבדתיך את איביך בארץ אשר לא ידעת, 'I will make you a slave to your enemies in a land that you do not know' (Jer. 17:4 and, perhaps, 15:14).[41] Unknown is this land in Lamentations as well, since it is never stated explicitly who invaded and ravaged Yahweh's country: ומרב עבדה היא ישבה בגוים גלתה יהודה מעני, 'Judah has gone into exile because of guilt and hard servitude, she sits among the nations' (Lam. 1:3).

41. The text of Jer. 15:14a may be emended to read like Jer. 17:4aβ, cf. the *apparatus criticus* in BHS.

The Hebrew Bible and the Solon tradition

Common to the historiography of the Hebrew Bible and the Solon tradition is that the exile plays a decisive role in the creation of a harmonious society. Its end heralds the new era. In Egypt, Abraham's offspring became a people, and the slavery there ushered in prosperity and a life in Yahweh's country under the deity's guidance and blessing. Contrary to Egypt, only one text in the Hebrew Bible explicitly associates the Babylonian exile with slavery: 2 Chronicles 36:20, but Deutero-Isaiah's accusation against Maiden Chaldea (Isa. 47:6) seems to hinge on the same association; cf. above. In the Book of Jeremiah, it is the people remaining in Yahweh's country under Babylonian sovereignty who are slaves, not the exiles. The point is obviously that Yahweh is their owner, but he temporarily transferred his ownership to the Babylonian king. After seventy years, ownership would return to Yahweh.

In the Hebrew Bible and in the Solon tradition, the respective peoples are enslaved at home and abroad. Solon's repatriates and the former slaves in Attica commenced their new lives under Solon's εὐνομία, and in the Bible the repatriates and the former slaves of the Babylonian Great King were set free by the Persian King Cyrus, Yahweh's Messiah (Isa. 45:1), in order to commence their new lives under Yahweh's guidance. In this regard, Israel is the contrast to Hellas. In Solon's poems, justice is caused by social processes and the ruler's wise legislation; in the Bible, justice is defined by Yahweh. In both, the people's exile and enslavement make up learning processes. The reader of Solon's poems is persuaded to long for εὐνομία, and the reader of the biblical texts about exile and the people's enslavement is supposed to long for the implementation of Yahweh's laws.

The memory of Solon was very much alive in the Hellenistic period. It is possible to read significant parts of the Hebrew Bible as the self-aware contrast to the spreading Hellenization in order to define and develop the concept of being Yahweh's people. Solomon outshines Solon as regards magnificence. The biblical king doesn't have to go anywhere in order to become a sage; he only needs Yahweh's blessing. In the Bible, good laws do not emanate from wise rulers, but they are decreed by Yahweh and imparted by a faithful mediator such as Moses. And the biblical stories about Yahweh's legislation and the exile and return of Israelites as means of educating Yahweh's people are meant to be more magnificent than anything in the Greek world.

III

Fleets from Kittim (Numbers 24:24) – Roman-era texts

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10

The Books of the Maccabees and Polybius

Philippe Wajdenbaum

Introduction

Books 1 and 2 Maccabees do not offer a successive narrative as the two-volume works of Samuel, Kings and Chronicles do. They offer, rather, variant narratives of the forced Hellenization of Judea, which prompted the revolt of the sons of Mattathias. Judas succeeded in repelling Antiochus IV, who had desecrated the temple of Jerusalem. Its purification and restoration is commemorated by the Jewish holiday of Hanukkah. After the death of Judas, who had the support of the Romans in his struggle against the Seleucids, his brothers, Jonathan and Simon, took over. Jonathan, courted by the pretenders to the throne of Antioch, Demetrius and Alexander Balas, was awarded the title of high priest by Alexander. After Jonathan, Simon led the revolt, until his son, John Hyrcanus, succeeded him and established an independent kingdom of Judea. 1 Maccabees ends with these events. Succeeding events in Palestine are known mainly from Josephus' *War of the Jews* and *Jewish Antiquities*. Several quarrels of succession followed the reign of Hyrcanus, as Jews called Pharisees revolted and were persecuted by the Hasmoneans in turn. Decades of unrest convinced Pompey to invade Judea and, a few decades later, Roman power installed the puppet-dynasty of Herod, an Idumean who married the Hasmonean Princess Mariamne. These events are not narrated in any biblical work.

The Greek Books of the Maccabees are not part of the Jewish canon, and were rejected by the Protestant Reformers as 'apocryphal', while Catholics consider them an integral part of the Old Testament. The Orthodox Church also accepts them, along with 3–4 Maccabees.[1] Books 1–2 Maccabees were transmitted through several manuscript traditions, including three uncials of the Septuagint: Alexandrinus, Sinaiticus and Vaticanus.[2] The Greek of 1 Maccabees is similar to that of the Septuagint, with errors probably due to Hebraisms and

1. See Niels Peter Lemche, *The Old Testament between Theology and History: A Critical Survey* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), 5–6.
2. John R. Bartlett, *The First and Second Books of the Maccabees* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 14.

transliterations of names, suggesting that it is a translation. Textual criticism depends primarily on Greek and Latin manuscripts.[3]

It is generally assumed that 1 Maccabees is more historical, whereas 2 Maccabees is understood as theological. Indeed, the former, covering a narrower chronology, focuses on the resistance of devout Jews in the face of the 'temptation' of Hellenism, including several stories of martyrs. It depicts godless high priests, introducing customs contrary to Mosaic Law. 2 Maccabees was probably written in Greek, and is presented as an epitome of a longer work (2 Macc. 2:24), otherwise unknown. Katherine Stott has shown that the recurrent use of cited sources in the Bible, the authenticity of which can be questioned, bolstered literary credibility.[4] According to Stott, such references, regardless of their historicity, serve to conceal actual sources,[5] suggesting the possibility that hidden behind an unknown and possibly fictive Jason of Cyrene lay other sources. 1 Maccabees 16:24's allusion to the chronicles of John Hyrcanus may also be questioned.

The difference between a Jewish Hebrew Bible and a Christian Old Testament is significant for the theological issues that have guided the determination of these canons. Jewish tradition does value the story of the Maccabees, with a feast dedicated to Judas' victory over Antiochus. 1–2 Maccabees, however, with alleged but unknown Hebrew originals, were thought unworthy for inclusion in the Jewish Bible. The theological content does not seem contrary to Jewish tradition, but seems rather a continuation of themes in earlier biblical books, relating how the faith of Jews was reinforced by the piety of the Hasmonean party, facing the threat of dangerous Hellenism. However, the biblical deity does not play a large role in the stories of 1 Maccabees, which are conducted primarily on a human scale. That can also be said of the Book of Esther, which is actually part of the Jewish canon.

According to Niels Peter Lemche, the reason for the exclusion of 1–2 Maccabees from the Jewish canon was more chronological than theological, as the Hebrew Bible ends with Ezra and the last prophets, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi.[6] In other words, the events of the Hellenistic period do not appear in the Jewish Bible explicitly – but only in the form of prophecies to be fulfilled in a distant future, as in Daniel, in chapters 8 and 11. Daniel is presented as having lived in the sixth century BCE. Lemche suggests that the rabbinic refusal to regard those books relating the Hellenistic period as sacred might be evidence that the

3. *Ibid*., 15.

4. Katherin M. Stott, *Why Did They Write This Way? Reflections on References to Written Documents in the Hebrew Bible and Ancient Literature*, Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 492 (London: T&T Clark, 2008). See *ibid*., 133–5 for a discussion about the authenticity of the letters in 2 Macc.

5. Stott writes about the Book of Kings: 'Another possibility worth considering is that explicit citations of sources can be designed to conceal dependence on other undesignated material/sources' (*ibid*., 59).

6. Niels Peter Lemche, 'The Old Testament – a Hellenistic Book?', *Did Moses Speak Attic?*, L. L. Grabbe (ed.), JSOTSup 317 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 287–318.

biblical books were, in fact, written at that time. The Pharisees, the main authority of Judaism after the fall of the Second Temple, seem deliberately to have chosen to conclude their Bible with the Persian rule, whereas Christians, who kept 1–2 Maccabees, were moved to ensure an historical transition to the New Testament.

There are probably other reasons for the rejection by the rabbis of 1–2 Maccabees. Indeed, we know from Josephus Flavius that the Pharisees denied John Hyrcanus the title of high priest, which he had assumed (Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*, 13.288–98). His son, Alexander Jannaeus, persecuted Jews and crucified 800 in front of their families (*Ant.* 13.380–81). Even though Queen Alexandra managed to reconcile the party of the Pharisees by giving them more power (*Ant.* 13.408–9), the memory of persecution is still felt in the unfavourable treatment of the Hasmoneans in Talmudic literature.[7] Since the Maccabees were the forerunners and ancestors of the Hasmonean dynasty, it is no wonder that the Pharisees responsible for the canonization of the Hebrew Bible chose to reject the story of their rise to power. In addition, 1 Maccabees adopts a very openly pro-Roman bias (see 1 Macc. 8), which, after the invasion of Judea by Pompey in 63 BCE, the fall of the Second Temple by Titus in 70 CE, and the persecutions of Hadrian in 135 CE, was deeply unacceptable to the rabbis.[8] Thus, it seems that the rabbis would not accept as canonical the Books of the Maccabees, for reasons of chronology and theology (the end of prophetic inspiration is placed in the Persian period), but also probably for political reasons, both as a reaction against the Hasmoneans and against Rome.

According to rabbinic tradition, the Jewish canon was fixed at the end of the first century CE. At the same time, Josephus (who was much more compliant towards Rome) clearly based his chronicle of the events of the second century BCE on 1 Maccabees in the twelfth book of his *Jewish Antiquities*.[9] Josephus does not seem to have granted this text the status of an inspired book, but he did not hesitate to use it as a historical document. Josephus obviously had other sources for events after the reign of John Hyrcanus, most likely Nicolaus of Damascus.[10] Josephus also occasionally relied on Greek sources, which overlapped data in 1 Maccabees; namely, the *Histories* of Polybius (Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*, 12.354–9).

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7. On the negative treatment of the Hasmoneans in the Talmud, see Étienne Nodet, *La Crise Maccabéenne* (Paris: Cerf, 2005), 56 and 260, n. 2. The Talmud refers to the miracle of the long-lasting oil, but does not mention the main characters of the Maccabean revolution.
8. However, biblical literature common to Jewish and Christian canons is not without some sympathy for a dominant foreign power: the Persian kings are portrayed as just and favourable to the Jews in the books of Est., Ezra and Neh., and Isa. even grants Cyrus with the title of Messiah (Isa. 45:1).
9. Isahiah M. Gafni, 'Josephus and 1 Maccabees', *Josephus, the Bible and History*, Louis H. Feldman & Gohei Hata (eds) (Leiden: Brill, 1988), 116–31.
10. Ben Zion Wacholder, 'Josephus and Nicolaus of Damascus', *Josephus, the Bible and History*, Feldman & Hata, 147–72.

Polybius of Megalopolis recounted the Punic Wars, between Rome and Carthage, in forty books, of which the first five are known in their entirety, and the others only in fragments. Polybius, imitating the method of historical analysis inaugurated by Thucydides, giving the least credit to stories which seemed legendary or involved gods (see Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, I, 20–22), traced the accession of Rome as a leading power in the Mediterranean by fully addressing all of the causes which contributed to it. Among these were wars waged by the heirs of Alexander's empire, the Antigonids of Greece, the Attalids of Pergamum, the Seleucids of Coele-Syria and the Lagids or Ptolemies of Egypt. Rome, gaining strength in its military successes against the Celts of Spain and against Carthage, gradually became arbiter of Greek conflicts, receiving their embassies, even stopping Antiochus IV when he tried to conquer Egypt. This latter event is recorded in the Bible in the form of a prophecy to be fulfilled in Daniel 11:30, and as a *fait accompli* in 1 Maccabees.

It is commonly accepted by biblical criticism that the Book of Daniel dates from the Hellenistic period, as it tells in the form of prophecies *ex eventu* what took place from the Persian conquest to the persecution of the Jews by Antiochus IV in the year 165–164 BCE. However, according to Paul Niskanen, although the date of the Book of Daniel is widely accepted as necessarily subsequent to the facts it describes, scholars never considered that this book was perhaps inspired by Greek literature.[11] Niskanen shows that the notion of the succession of world empires, as prophesied in Daniel 7–8 by the angel Gabriel, is also found among Greek historians, including Herodotus, Thucydides, Ctesias and especially Polybius. Polybius had seen the birth of the Roman Empire, which replaced the former Macedonian empire of Alexander, itself based on old Medo-Persia, which, in turn, had been based on the yet older Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian empires. Niskanen assumes that the author of Daniel could have read Herodotus, whose *Histories* might have reached Judea in the Hellenistic period. While Niskanen remains cautious about Polybius, however, he cannot help but see the perfect convergence between chapter 11 of Daniel, which describes the disputes between Ptolemy IV and Antiochus III, respectively called 'King of the South' and 'King of the North' (Dan. 11:11-16), and the detailed account given by Polybius of these same events. Niskanen believes, along with most scholars, that the *terminus a quo* for the Book of Daniel is the persecution of the Judeans by Antiochus IV in 165–164 BCE, since the book does not mention the revolt of the Maccabbees. In this respect, Niskanen believes that the author of Daniel could not have read the works of Polybius, which were written two decades later.[12] However, Étienne Nodet believes that the Book of Daniel is of a later date than 165–164 BCE, and that '*Kittim*' in Daniel probably

11. Paul Niskanen, *The Human and the Divine in History: Herodotus and the Book of Daniel*, JSOT Supplements Series 396 (London: T&T Clark International, 2004).
12. *Ibid*., 44, n. 69: 'While Polybius, who wrote a few decades after Daniel, cannot be a source for him, they may be working out of a common tradition.'

designates the Romans.[13] In this respect, we might consider that the author of Daniel borrowed data directly from Polybius. This chapter will focus rather on 1 Maccabees. Polybius has been a particular inspiration to Livy in his *History of Rome*. In the first century CE, Josephus quotes Polybius and even compares his testimony with respect to 1 Maccabees (see below). This shows that, from antiquity to the present, Polybius remained one of the fundamental sources for the understanding of the history of the Macedonian kingdoms in the Near East and the accession of Rome as a world power.

I would like to speculate in this chapter that the author of 1 Maccabees, who wrote not earlier than the reign of Hyrcanus – the late second century BCE – could have been inspired directly by Polybius, as a source of information about the rivalries between the Seleucids and the Ptolemies. Of course, the author of 1 Maccabees obviously possessed other reliable sources about Judean history and the Hasmonean dynasty.[14] We can assume that this author might have crossed this data with that in Polybius. This would reflect the literary technique used by the author of the Book of Kings, who seems to have crossed data specific to the kings of Israel and Judah with the *Histories* of Herodotus.[15] If this first hypothesis were true, we should consider whether the stories about the heroic Maccabees also were inspired – without prejudging their historicity – from the exploits of Polybius' favourite characters like Scipio Africanus or Hannibal Barca. We will look first at the passages in which Polybius and the Maccabees overlap historically, and then analyse some of their shared literary motifs.

Felix Gryglewicz has remarked upon the resemblance in style between Polybius and 1 Maccabees, a resemblance he considered to be a major paradox.[16] Indeed, 1 Maccabees tells of the Jewish revolt against Hellenism, but its author seems to conform in all respects to historiography as practised by Polybius, a Greek. Gryglewicz guesses that this too clearly Hellenized style

13. Étienne Nodet, 'Les Kittim, les Romains et Daniel', *Revue Biblique*, 118(2) (2011), 260–68.
14. Jonathan A. Goldstein, *First Maccabees* (New York: Doubleday, 1976), 90. Goldstein thought that the accounts of the battles in 1 Maccabees were not historically reliable, but rather inspired from literary elements from the Hebrew Bible; a point challenged by Bezalel Bar-Kochva, *Judas Maccabeus: The Jewish Struggle against the Seleucids* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 152–3.
15. See Jan-Wim Wesselius, *The Origins of the History of Israel: Herodotus' Histories as Blueprint for the First Books of the Bible*, JSOTSup 345 (London/New York: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 94–6. On Kgs, see also Ingrid Hjelm, 'The Hezekiah Narrative as a Foundation Myth for Jerusalem's Rise to Sovereignty', *Special Issue on Jerusalem: Islamic Studies*, S. K. Jayyusi (ed.), 40 (2001), 661–74; *idem*, *Jerusalem's Rise to Sovereignty – Zion and Gerizim in Competition* (London: T&T Clark International), 266–93; T. L. Thompson, 'A Problem in Historical Method: Reiterative Narrative as Supersessionist Historiography', *Recenti Tendenze nella Ricostruzione dell Storia Antica D'Israele*, M. Liverani (ed.) (Rome: Academia Nazionale dei Lincei, 2005), 183–96 (esp. 190–95).
16. Felix Gryglewicz, 'Paradoxes of the First Book of Maccabees', *Scripture* 4(7) (1950), 197–205.

of 1 Maccabees would have led the Pharisees to reject it from the canon of the Hebrew Bible – preferring the apocalyptic style of Daniel – whereas, writes Gryglewicz, the Catholic Church preserved it.[17] He imagines that the Jewish embassy to Rome described in 1 Maccabees 8 could have returned from its trip with Roman records to reconstruct the history of the Macedonian kingdoms, and therefore the author of 1 Maccabees became familiar with Greek historiography as practised by Polybius. But Gryglewicz is careful to refute the idea that the author of 1 Maccabees was able to know first-hand the work of Polybius. Yet he notes that when Polybius and 1 Maccabees describe the same events, their agreement is total.[18] But Gryglewicz considers that this agreement between the two authors results from their respective knowledge of primary sources: Polybius was a personal friend of Scipio the Younger, and, according to Gryglewicz, the author of 1 Maccabees had personally known Simon and had access to royal archives. For Gryglewicz, the author of 1 Maccabees would thus share with Polybius the fact of having participated in some of the battles he describes, for the rest relying on archives, and avoiding unnecessary digressions, focusing on historical facts. Polybius and 1 Maccabees therefore both relate the same historical events and utilize a similar technique of historiography.

Gryglewicz's analysis is significant for biblical criticism: Whatever influences of Greco-Roman literature he is willing to recognize, he refuses to consider the hypothesis of a direct influence of Polybius as one of the sources of 1 Maccabees. If such an attitude prevails towards a biblical book of which the dating to the Roman era cannot be disputed, it is not at all surprising that the supposedly oldest books are understood by this same biblical criticism as perfectly free from Greek influence. If Gryglewicz thought it a paradox to see traces of Hellenism in a book telling of a revolution against Hellenism, I see a much greater paradox in biblical studies: the refusal to see the traces of Hellenism throughout the whole Bible. On the other hand, E. Bickerman has demonstrated that the Hasmoneans were Hellenized rulers.[19] It would therefore be unsurprising

17. This insistent reproach from a Catholic scholar towards Judaism for failing to keep these books in their Hebrew form is another reminder of 'supersessionist' issues often at work in 'conservative' biblical criticism. On this issue, see Niels Peter Lemche, 'Conservative Scholarship on the Move', *Scandinavian Journal of Old Testament*, 19(2) (December 2005), 203–50.
18. Gryglewicz, 'Paradoxes of the First Book of Maccabees', 201.
19. E. Bickerman, *The God of the Maccabees: Studies on the Meaning and Origin of the Maccabean Revolt* (Leiden: Brill, 1979). Other scholars have insisted on the Hellenized character of the Hasmoneans: Uriel Rappaport, 'Hellenization of the Hasmoneans', *Jewish Assimilation, Acculturation and Accomodation: Past Tradition, Current Issues and Future Prospects*, M. Mor (ed.) (Lanham, MD: University of America Press, 1992), 1–13; Tessa Rajak, 'The Hasmoneans and the Use of Hellenism', *A Tribute to Geza Vermes, Essays on Jewish and Christian Literature*, P. R. Davies & R. T. White (eds) (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990), 261–80. See also Lee I. Levine, *Judaism and Hellenism in Antiquity: Conflict or Confluence?* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1998), 40; Tessa Rajak (ed.), *Perspectives on Hellenistic Rulers* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005); *idem*, *The Jewish Dialogue with Greece and Rome:*

if their 'official' writer were a Hellenized scholar. Other scholars, in response to Bickerman, stressed that Jewish culture remained rather impermeable to Hellenism.[20] The present author supports a rather challenging theory, namely that the Hebrew Bible itself is the result of Hellenized Jewish scholars using Greek 'classics', such as Homer, Herodotus, Euripides and Plato, as sources for their Scripture.[21] In this respect, I suggest that the Books of the Maccabees also drew upon Greek sources.

In the following pages, I will compare similar passages between Polybius and 1 and 2 Maccabees. 1 Maccabees seems to bear direct links to the text of Polybius, whereas 2 Maccabees likely derives from other sources. Yet 2 Maccabees is relatively consistent with Polybius on the folly of Antiochus IV.[22] Let us note that it is commonly assumed that 3 Maccabees, part of the Christian Orthodox canon, with some minor discrepancies, relies on Polybius for the depiction of the battle of Raphia.[23]

Antiochus IV, stopped by the Romans in Egypt

> In those days he went out of Israel children of iniquity, who seduced many, saying: Come and make alliance with the nations around us, for since we withdrew from them, many ills have befallen us. And this word seemed good to them. Some of the people were members, and went to the king, and he gave them power to live by the laws of the Gentiles. And they built a gymnasium in Jerusalem, like the nations they concealed their circumcision, separated from the holy covenant, and joined the nations, and sold themselves to do evil. Antiochus, having strengthened in his kingdom, began to want to reign in the land of Egypt, to be king of both kingdoms. And he entered Egypt with a mighty army, with chariots, elephants, horsemen and many ships, and he

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Studies in Cultural and Social Interaction (Leiden: Brill, 2001); John J. Collins, *Jewish Cult and Hellenistic Culture*: *Essays on the Jewish Encounter with Hellenism and Roman rule* (Leiden: Brill, 2005); J. J. Collins & G. E. Sterling (eds), *Hellenism in the Land of Israel* (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 2001).

20. Louis H. Feldman tends to minimize the Greek influence on Jewish culture in Judea, *Judaism and Hellenism Reconsidered*, JSJSup 107 (Leiden: Brill, 2006). For Feldman, the treaty signed between the Hasmoneans and Rome did not mean that the former became Hellenized (*ibid*., 20–21).
21. Philippe Wajdenbaum, *Argonauts of the Desert: Structural Analysis of the Hebrew Bible*, Copenhagen International Seminar (Sheffield: Equinox, 2011).
22. Robert Doran noticed some similarities of style between 2 Macc. and Polybius, and he rightly emphasized the main difference between them: 2 Maccabees relates miracle stories, whereas Polybius avoids them. R. Doran, 'Jewish Hellenistic Historians before Josephus', *Aufstig und Niedergang dër romischen Welt*, Wolfgang Haase & Hildegarde Temporini (eds) (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1986), 246–97.
23. Compare 3 Macc. 1:1-7 and Polybius 5:40–86. See Erich S. Gruen, *Heritage and Hellenism: The Reinvention of Jewish Tradition* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998), 227. See also N. Clayton Croy, *3 Maccabees* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 38.

> fought against Ptolemy king of Egypt, and Ptolemy was afraid and fled before him; and many of his men fell stricken. Antiochus took the fortified cities in the land of Egypt, and took the spoils of Egypt. Antiochus returned after beating Egypt in the hundred and forty-third year, and he went up against Israel. He went up to Jerusalem with a powerful army. He entered the holy place with pride, and he took the golden altar, the candle light with all its vessels, the table of proposition, libation basins, bowls, the golden censers, the curtain, the crowns and the golden ornament that was before the temple, and he broke everything. He also took the silver, gold and precious vessels, and took also the hidden treasures he found, and after having taken all this away, he went to his country. He made a slaughter of men, and he spoke with great pride. So there was great mourning in Israel and throughout the country.
>
> (1 Macc. 1:12-26)[24]

Polybius himself testifies that Antiochus attempted to conquer Egypt (Polybius, XXVIII, 17–19). But Antiochus was stopped by the intervention of Rome. General Popilius Laenas met Antiochus at Eleusis, a suburb of Alexandria, which Antiochus was besieging. Popilius traced in the ground a circle around the king with a stick, and asked him not to leave after answering what he thought of the *senatus-consultum* telling him to leave Egypt. Antiochus bowed to the will of the Romans (Polybius, XXIX, 27:1–13). Daniel (11:30-31) and 1 Maccabees agree that Antiochus, upon his return from Egypt, plundered and desecrated the altar of the Temple. But Polybius says nothing of this sack of Jerusalem.

> The senatus-consultum ordered Antiochus to cease hostilities immediately against Ptolemy. In the time that they ordered him, he took back his forces in Syria, ulcerated and groaning, but yielding, for the moment, in the circumstances. (Polybius XXIX, 27:7–8)[25]

The procession at Daphne according to Polybius and the games at Tyre according to 2 Maccabees

Polybius describes Antiochus IV Epiphanes as a half-mad and exuberant king. He organized a parade in Daphne, with great fanfare. This may remind one of the games organized in Tyre in 2 Maccabees 4, under the same Antiochus IV, in which a delegation of Judean athletes participated. The practice of sport and the establishment of a gymnasium in Jerusalem were seen by the author of 2 Maccabees as a sign of Hellenization close to apostasy.[26] In describing the

24. All translations of 1 and 2 Maccabees follow the Revised Standard Version of the Bible.
25. All translations of Polybius are from Evelyn S. Shuckburgh, *Polybius: Histories* (London: Macmillan, 1889). The numbering of books and chapters here follows that of current editions.
26. On the Hellenization of Judea, see Martin Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in their Encounter in Palestine During the Early Hellenistic Period*, vols 1 and 2 (London:

games given by Antiochus IV, Polybius mentions the worship of Greek gods, the very ones that the authors of 1 and 2 Maccabees depict as an abomination. Polybius also confirms that Antiochus IV had plundered temples to ensure the splendour of these games. This seems to corroborate the accusation by the Bible that Antiochus IV had plundered the temple of Jerusalem. The procession at Daphne depicts a long line of soldiers of various origins, as a display of Antiochus' power. After the soldiers, came images of the gods, of the Night, Day, Earth, Heaven, Morning and Noon. There was also a significant amount of gold and silver vessels, and last, women holding unguents and scented oils that were distributed to the athletes as a reward. (Polybius, XXX, 25:1–19, 26:1–9; the last part of the text, referring to the behaviour of Antiochus IV, comes from fragments of Polybius collected by Diodorus Siculus, XXXI 16:2–17 and Athenaeus, X, 439).[27] This passage in Polybius seems to be comparable to the description of the Hellenization of Judea and the games in Tyre:

> When the king assented and Jason came to office, he at once shifted his countrymen over to the Greek way of life. He set aside the existing royal concessions to the Jews, secured through John the father of Eupolemus, who went on the mission to establish friendship and alliance with the Romans; and he destroyed the lawful ways of living and introduced new customs contrary to the law. For with alacrity he founded a gymnasium right under the citadel, and he induced the noblest of the young men to wear the Greek hat. There was such an extreme of Hellenization and increase in the adoption of foreign ways because of the surpassing wickedness of Jason, who was ungodly and no high priest, that the priests were no longer intent upon their service at the altar. Despising the sanctuary and neglecting the sacrifices, they hastened to take part in the unlawful proceedings in the wrestling arena after the call to the discus, disdaining the honours prized by their fathers and putting the highest value upon Greek forms of prestige. For this reason heavy disaster overtook them, and those whose ways of living they admired and wished to imitate completely became their enemies and punished them. For it is no light thing to show irreverence to the divine laws -- a fact which later events will make clear. When the quadrennial games were being held at Tyre and the king was present, the vile Jason sent envoys, chosen as being Antiochian citizens from Jerusalem, to carry three hundred silver drachmas for the sacrifice to Hercules. Those who carried the money, however, thought best not to use it for sacrifice, because that was inappropriate, but to expend it for another purpose. So this

SCM Press, 1974). See also Edouard Will & Claude Orrieux, *Ioudaïsmos – Hellènismos – Essai sur le judaïsme judéen à l'époque hellénistique* (Nancy: Presses Universitaires de Nancy, 1986).

27. The date of the festival at Daphne is not settled, since the fragments of Polybius do not allow to understand the original chronology. See Panagiotis P. Iossif, 'Imago Mundi. Expression et représentation de l'idéologie royale séleucide. La procession de Daphné', *New Studies on the Seleucids*, Edward Dabrowa (ed.) (Krakow: Jagiellonian University Press, 2011), 125–58.

> money was intended by the sender for the sacrifice to Hercules, but by the decision of its carriers it was applied to the construction of triremes.
>
> (2 Macc. 4:10-20)

The games mentioned in 2 Maccabees happened in Tyre, and those mentioned by Polybius in Daphne. Yet this same chapter of 2 Maccabees cites, a few verses further on, the city of Daphne:

> When Onias became fully aware of these acts he publicly exposed them, having first withdrawn to a place of sanctuary at Daphne near Antioch.
>
> (2 Macc. 4:33)

The games described in 2 Maccabees could partly be based on the description given by Polybius of the games in Daphne. Polybius mentions the defeat of Ptolemy Philometor, also evoking 1 Maccabees 1:18. The description of the looting of the temple by Antiochus in 1 Maccabees 1:21-3 seems to be a reiteration of 2 Kings 25:13-17, when Nebuchadnezzar plundered the temple of Solomon.[28] However, the description of the wealth of Antiochus by Polybius as looted from Egypt (Polybius XXX, 26:9) seems to agree with the narrative of 1 Maccabees. The envoys of Jason carried silver drachmae for the sacrifice to Hercules, which seems consistent with the description of the procession of the images of the gods and demi-gods at the games of Daphne (Polybius XXX, 25:14–15).

Madness of Antiochus IV according to Polybius

1 Maccabees portrays Antiochus IV as a heinous king who massacred the Jews. Polybius describes him as a mad and ridiculous tyrant, a megalomaniac, prompt to please the Greek gods. This latter point seems echoed by Antiochus' first authorizing some Jews to worship these gods (1 Macc. 1:13), and later forcing all of them into this cult and abandoning Jewish religious practices (1 Macc. 1:44-50). Antiochus built a statue of Baal/Zeus that he placed in the temple, the 'abomination of desolation' (1 Macc. 1:54; see Dan. 9:27; 11:31; 12:11). Polybius' account of Antiochus IV by contrast, depicts him as a crazy, yet harmless, man, embarrassing for his subjects, some calling him *Epimanes* (the Madman) instead of *Epiphanes*. Nevertheless, he was keen to offer great sacrifices to the gods (Polybius, XXVI, 1), which seems consistent with 1 Maccabees 1.

Death of Antiochus IV according to Polybius and 1 Maccabees 6

> In the meantime died Antiochus of Syria. This prince, always eager for wealth, had resolved to make an expedition against the temple of Artemis, in Elymais.

28. For a detailed analysis of 1 Macc.'s references to previous biblical books, see Hjelm, *Jerusalem's Rise to Sovereignty*.

> No sooner had he arrived in this country, that, disappointed in his hopes by the resistance of the Barbarians, who opposed such a sacrilege, he turned back: it is in his retirement that he died in Tabes, City of Persia, driven mad, as some say, because of the visions that the goddess had sent in punishment for his criminal attempt against her temple. (Polybius, XXXI, 9)

> King Antiochus was going through the upper provinces when he heard that Elymais in Persia was a city famed for its wealth in silver and gold. Its temple was very rich, containing golden shields, breastplates, and weapons left there by Alexander, the son of Philip, the Macedonian king who first reigned over the Greeks. So he came and tried to take the city and plunder it, but he could not, because his plan became known to the men of the city and they withstood him in battle. So he fled and in great grief departed from there to return to Babylon. Then someone came to him in Persia and reported that the armies which had gone into the land of Judah had been routed; that Lysias had gone first with a strong force, but had turned and fled before the Jews; that the Jews had grown strong from the arms, supplies, and abundant spoils which they had taken from the armies they had cut down; that they had torn down the abomination which he had erected upon the altar in Jerusalem; and that they had surrounded the sanctuary with high walls as before, and also Beth-zur, his city. When the king heard this news, he was astounded and badly shaken. He took to his bed and became sick from grief, because things had not turned out for him as he had planned … Thus Antiochus the king died there in the one hundred and forty-ninth year. (1 Macc. 6:1-16)

The accounts of the death of Antiochus IV in Polybius and 1 Maccabees are remarkably parallel, with the difference that the author of 1 Maccabees adds the element of the late redemption of the Seleucid king, who regrets having offended the god of the Jews (1 Macc. 6:9-13). This story seems to substitute for what Polybius says: that Antiochus IV had gone mad and died for attempting to profane the sanctuary of Artemis, whose name seems carefully avoided in the biblical narrative. However, Josephus, using both 1 Maccabees and Polybius as sources, saw the similarities and differences in both versions, and gave more credence to the biblical version:

> So I am surprised to see Polybius of Megalopolis, who was an honest man, say that Antiochus died for trying to loot the temple of Artemis in Persia, for a mere intention, not followed by execution, deserves no punishment. If Polybius believed that Antiochus died for a reason like this, it is much more likely to think that it is the sacrilegious plunder of the temple in Jerusalem that killed the king. But on this point I do not want to engage discussion with those who believe the explanation of the Megalopolitan historian closer to the truth than ours. (Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*, 12.354–9)[29]

29. Josephus Flavius, *The Works of Flavius Josephus*, translated by William Whiston (Auburn, IN: John E. Beardsley, 1895).

This fragment of Polybius is reported by Josephus himself, and is not known from other sources. Some scholars doubt its authenticity, as it resembles too closely the narrative of 1 Maccabees, from which it could be interpolated.[30] Nevertheless, I believe that a more thorough comparison of Polybius with 1 Maccabees suggests that the latter is based on the former – and it may well be that the passage of Polybius was authentic (without assuming its historical accuracy). The story of the death of Antiochus IV in 2 Maccabees 9, which Josephus did not seem to know, is much longer, omits the city of Elymais and emphasizes the redemption of Antiochus, in the same theological perspective which strongly differentiates 2 Maccabees from 1 Maccabees. Note that a town called Elymais is not known from sources other than 1 Maccabees. On the other hand, the Persian region of Elymais that Polybius mentions is well known. Furthermore, the fact that 1 Maccabees seems deliberately to omit the name of Artemis, present in Polybius, would suggest that the fragment is genuine, and that 1 Maccabees is inspired from it, attributing, as Josephus points out, the death of Antiochus to the desecration of the temple of Jerusalem, rather than the intended profanation of a pagan temple. Whereas 2 Maccabees 4:20 names Hercules, 1 Maccabees seems to omit any direct reference to the Greek gods.

The Maccabees confront the army of Lysias – heroic sacrifice of Eleazar

After the death of Antiochus IV, Lysias, guardian of the young heir to the throne Antiochus V, resumed the war against the Maccabees. The second part of 1 Maccabees 6 tells of a heroic battle, with hints of Homeric echoes. The onset of war elephants and phalange attacks cannot fail again to evoke the stories of battles according to Polybius, especially when he recounts clashes between Romans and the army of Hannibal of Carthage.[31] As a notable detail, both the author of 1 Maccabees and Polybius called the drivers leading elephants 'Indians'. This could be indicative of textual dependence – despite the apparent realism. The sacrifice of Eleazar, who killed an elephant which collapsed on him, recalls one of the first battles reported by Polybius in I, 34:7 and I, 40:13: elephants, pierced by the weapons of the Romans, collapsed on the Carthaginian soldiers. Further, Hasdrubal, Hannibal's brother, lost his life by sacrificing himself heroically in battle.

30. Auguste Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoires des Séleucides (323–64 av. JC.) – Volume 2* (Paris: E. Leroux, 1914), 297–306. E. Will notes that trying to sort out fact from fiction in the tradition concerning the death of Antiochus IV is a 'tedious and inconclusive exercise'. E. Will, *Histoire politique du monde hellénistique, Tome II: Des avènements d'Antiochos III et Philippe V à la fin des Lagides* (Paris: Seuil, 2003), 354.
31. Military techniques from the Hellenistic kingdoms and their links with 1 Macc. have been compared by B. Bar-Kochva, *Judas Maccabeus.* Bar-Kochva never assumes that the author of 1 Macc. read Polybius, even though he often compares them. Rather, he believes the author of 1 Macc. to have been an eyewitness of the events he described (66).

> They showed the elephants the juice of grapes and mulberries, to arouse them for battle. And they distributed the beasts among the phalanxes; with each elephant they stationed a thousand men armed with coats of mail, and with brass helmets on their heads; and five hundred picked horsemen were assigned to each beast. These took their position beforehand wherever the beast was; wherever it went they went with it, and they never left it. And upon the elephants were wooden towers, strong and covered; they were fastened upon each beast by special harness, and upon each were four armed men who fought from there, and also *its Indian driver*. The rest of the horsemen were stationed on either side, on the two flanks of the army, to harass the enemy while being themselves protected by the phalanxes. When the sun shone upon the shields of gold and brass, the hills were ablaze with them and gleamed like flaming torches. Now a part of the king's army was spread out on the high hills, and some troops were on the plain, and they advanced steadily and in good order. All who heard the noise made by their multitude, by the marching of the multitude and the clanking of their arms, trembled, for the army was very large and strong. But Judas and his army advanced to the battle, and six hundred men of the king's army fell. And Eleazar, called Avaran, saw that one of the beasts was equipped with royal armour. It was taller than all the others, and he supposed that the king was upon it. So he gave his life to save his people and to win for himself an everlasting name. He courageously ran into the midst of the phalanx to reach it; he killed men right and left, and they parted before him on both sides. He got under the elephant, stabbed it from beneath, and killed it; but it fell to the ground upon him and he died. (1 Macc. 6:34-46)

> But as soon as Claudius fell upon the rear of the enemy the battle ceased to be equal: for the Iberians found themselves attacked on front and rear at once, which resulted in the greater part of them being cut down on the ground. Six of the elephants were killed with the men on them, four forced their way through the lines and were afterwards captured, having been abandoned by *their Indian drivers*. Hasdrubal had behaved on this occasion, as throughout his whole life, like a brave man, and died fighting: and he deserves not to be passed over without remark. I have already stated that Hannibal was his brother, and on his departure to Italy entrusted the command in Spain to him. (Polybius XI, 1:10–2:2)

Eleazar's heroic sacrifice resembles the death of Hasdrubal, brother of Hannibal. Other details of 1 Maccabees 6 resemble other battles related by Polybius, including a battle involving another Hasdrubal (the son of Gyscon) against Scipio. Both texts speak of thirty-two elephants on the battlefield.

> The number of his forces was a hundred thousand foot soldiers, twenty thousand horsemen, and *thirty-two elephants accustomed to war.* (1 Macc. 6:30)

> Hasdrubal having collected his forces from the various towns in which they had wintered, advanced to within a short distance of Ilipa and there encamped;

> forming his entrenchment at the foot of the mountains, with a plain in front of him well suited for a contest and battle. His infantry amounted to seventy thousand, his cavalry to four thousand, and *his elephants to thirty-two.*
>
> (Polybius XI, 20:1–2)

> When these troops were at close quarters the elephants were severely handled, being wounded and harassed on every side by the velites and cavalry, and did as much harm to their friends as to their foes; for they rushed about promiscuously and killed every one that fell in their way on either side alike.
>
> (Polybius XI, 24:1)

The shining weapons in the plain

Further, the author of 1 Maccabees mentions, in a rather Homeric style, how the weapons sparkled in the sunlight, a detail that is also found in Plutarch's account of the very same battle of Pydna in the *Life of Aemilius Paulus*, largely inspired by Polybius.[32] The motif of the sparkling weapons is rooted in Homer, as in the passage quoted below.

> He put the rest of the cavalry here and there, in two divisions, to excite the army by the sound of trumpets, and to animate his infantry battalions in tight. When the sun shone on the shields of gold and brass, the mountains shone, and they shone like lamps burning. (1 Macc. 6:38-9)

> Next to these came a third division, picked men, the flower of the Macedonians themselves for youthful strength and valour, gleaming with gilded armour and fresh scarlet coats. As these took their places in the line, they were illumined by the phalanx-lines of the Bronze-shields which issued from the camp behind them and filled the plain with the gleam of iron and the glitter of bronze, the hills, too, with the tumultuous shouts of their cheering. And with such boldness and swiftness did they advance that the first to be slain fell only two furlongs from the Roman camp. (Plutarch, *Life of Aemilius*, XVIII, 7–9)[33]

> You would never believe that travel together so many men, each in his throat, is gifted with a voice. They are silent, for fear of their leaders. Shines on all the shimmering glow of weapons which they are covered before going online.
>
> (Homer, *Iliad*, II, 430–32)[34]

32. Bar-Kochva, *Judas Maccabeus*, also noticed that this typical literary motif appears in Plutarch, in *Eumenes*, 14, and *Sulla*, 16 (159 and 327). Still he believed the author of 1 Macc. to be an eye-witness of that battle (159), writing in John Hyrcanus' early years.
33. Plutarch, *Lives*, translated by John Dryden (1683), revised by Arthur Hugh Cough (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, 1859).
34. Homer, *Iliad*, translated by Samuel Butler (1898).

It turns out that the story of the battle of Pydna, where Aemilius Paulus managed to defeat the King Perseus of Macedonia, is reduced to fragments in Polybius. Yet the story told by Plutarch in his *Life of Aemilius* is openly taken from the narrative of Polybius, which is, for the most part, lost. We could then infer that this detail of the weapons glittering in the plain, common to 1 Maccabees 6 and Plutarch, would come from a common source in book XXIX of Polybius. The defeat of Perseus did much to reduce the ambitions that Antiochus IV harboured against Egypt. This defeat of Perseus inflicted by the Romans is mentioned in 1 Maccabees 8:5 – thus, it is certain that it was known to its author.

Demetrius flees from Rome

1 Maccabees agrees with Polybius on the escape of Demetrius, the nephew of Antiochus III, who was held hostage in Rome. After the death of Antiochus Epiphanes, he pleaded to the Roman senate to obtain the throne of Syria, which had been given to Antiochus V, who was too young to reign, and to his tutor Lysias (Polybius XXXI, 20:1–7). Polybius relates that he was himself the friend of the young prince, and advised him to flee Rome. It is remarkable that 1 Maccabees recounts the detail that Demetrius only travelled with a small number of men, in agreement with Polybius' narrative (Polybius XXXI, 22:4–12). 2 Maccabees 14:1 states that Demetrius stayed first in Tripoli, a Phoenician port. Polybius names, among the friends of Demetrius, a certain Nicanor, perhaps the same Nicanor who became an enemy of the Maccabees in 1 Maccabees 7:26-47.[35]

> In the one hundred and fifty-first year Demetrius the son of Seleucus set forth from Rome, sailed with a few men to a city by the sea, and there began to reign. As he was entering the royal palace of his fathers, the army seized Antiochus and Lysias to bring them to him. But when this act became known to him, he said, 'Do not let me see their faces!' So the army killed them, and Demetrius took his seat upon the throne of his kingdom. (1 Macc. 7:1-4)

> They had long made all their preparations for sailing, *when Demetrius and his friends arrived about the third watch. There were altogether eight of them, besides five slaves and three boys.* Menyllus entered into conversation with them, showed them the provisions in store for the voyage, and commended them earnestly to the care of the shipmaster and crew. They then went on board, and the pilot weighed anchor and started just as day was breaking, having absolutely no idea of the real state of the case, but believing that he was conveying some soldiers from Menyllus to Ptolemy. (Polybius XXXI, 22:8–12)

35. Josephus believed they were the same person (*Jewish Antiquities*, 12.402–3). For Nodet, Josephus obviously relied on Polybius to make such an assumption; see Nodet, *La crise maccabéenne*, 428. B. Bar-Kochva does not think that they were the same person, because the name Nicanor was very common, and Josephus had no evidence to support his claim; Bar-Kochva, *Judas Maccabeus*, 353.

Polybius' account is more detailed concerning the aspects of Demetrius' escape from Rome, whereas 1 Maccabees tells of the assassination of Antiochus V and Lysias, which the fragments of Polybius do not mention. The author of 1 Maccabees may here have taken his information about Demetrius' escape from Rome with a few men directly from Polybius.

The alliance with Rome

Chapter 8 of 1 Maccabees gives us the strongest evidence suggesting that this book might be directly dependant upon Polybius. Indeed, it reports the alliance that the Maccabees struck up with the Roman power, in similar terms that evoke precisely the peace imposed on Antiochus III. Moreover, the description of the Roman conquests, the rise of Rome as a new power, the praise of its constitution and the ruin of Greece match on all points, including some amazing details, with the chronicle of Polybius. We will analyse the entire chapter from verses 1 to 32, in sequence.

The submission of the Galatians

> Now Judas heard of the fame of the Romans, that they were very strong and were well-disposed toward all who made an alliance with them, that they pledged friendship to those who came to them, and that they were very strong. Men told him of their wars and of the brave deeds which they were doing among the Galatians, how they had defeated them and forced them to pay tribute. (1 Macc. 8:1-2)

The Galatians, or Celts of Asia Minor, are mentioned numerous times by Polybius. They were defeated by Manlius Vulso (Polybius, XXI, 36–40). Polybius notes, as does 1 Maccabees, the tribute imposed on them (Polybius, XXI, 36:1, 40:1). Later, the Romans granted them independence, to counter the plans of Eumenes (Polybius, XXX, 28–30). This latter mention seems to agree with the Roman policy described by 1 Maccabees: in order to weaken the Macedonian kings, Rome offered friendship to the peoples who submitted to it. Furthermore, this information is found in the same book XXX of Polybius that tells of the eccentric conduct of Antiochus IV and the games he offered in Daphne. It is remarkable that the submission of the Galatians in Polybius is followed by the Treaty of Apamea, which imposed a tribute on Antiochus III and the delivery of hostages (Polybius, XXI, 42:1–26; see below). Both these passages of Polybius are reflected in 1 Maccabees 8.

Of gold and silver mines in Spain

> … and what they had done in the land of Spain to get control of the silver and gold mines there, and how they had gained control of the whole region by their planning and patience, even though the place was far distant from them … (1 Macc. 8:3-4)

> … or even of the silver and gold mines in Iberia itself, of which historians give long and contradictory accounts. (Polybius III, 57:3)

Polybius says he does not want to dwell on the subject of the silver and gold mines of Spain, yet he mentions them, as does 1 Maccabees. In the Greek texts, Polybius speaks of *Iberia*, the Hellenized form, whereas 1 Maccabees uses the Latin form *Spania* (*Hispania*).

The subjection of Philip and Perseus

> They also subdued the kings who came against them from the ends of the earth, until they crushed them and inflicted great disaster upon them; the rest paid them tribute every year. Philip, and Perseus king of the Macedonians, and the others who rose up against them, they crushed in battle and conquered … (1 Macc. 8:4-5)

Philip and Perseus, king of Macedonia (whom the original text of 1 Macc. calls king of the Kittim, as in 1 Macc. 1:1; cf. Gen. 10:4 and Num. 24:24), had been defeated by the Romans respectively in 197 BCE (Polybius, XVIII, 19–27) and in 168 BCE at the battle of Pydna (Polybius, XXIX, 15–18).

The submission of Antiochus III

> They also defeated Antiochus the Great, king of Asia, who went to fight against them with a hundred and twenty elephants and with cavalry and chariots and a very large army. He was crushed by them; they took him alive and decreed that he and those who should reign after him should pay a heavy tribute and give hostages and surrender some of their best provinces, the country of India and Media and Lydia. These they took from him and gave to Eumenes the king … (1 Macc. 8:6-8)

Antiochus III called the Great, was defeated by the Romans after attempting to invade Greece (Polybius, XX, 1–8, cf. Livy, XXXVI, 19). Livy mentions his elephants (Livy, XXXVI, 19:4), and writes that only 500 men survived from the army of Antiochus, who were initially 60,000 (Livy, XXXVI, 19:11). We will see below the treaty called the 'Peace of Apamea', imposed on Antiochus III, in comparison with the treaty signed with the Jews in Rome, in this same chapter 8 of 1 Maccabees. But before that, the following text refers to the ruin of Greece when it tried to rise up against Rome.

On the ruin of Greece

> The Greeks planned to come and destroy them, but this became known to them, and they sent a general against the Greeks and attacked them. Many of them were wounded and fell, and the Romans took captive their wives and children; they plundered them, conquered the land, tore down their strongholds, and enslaved them to this day. (1 Macc. 8:9-10)

> The thirty-eighth book contains the consumption of the woes of Greece. Certainly, it has often proven calamities general or specific, but never the word calamity in all its extent, was applied to any past disasters as accurately as the one we witnessed. We already have pity on the Greeks merely seeing what they suffered, how much greater must seem their misfortune if one enters the details! Some awful, in fact, that seems the blow that knocked Carthage, it can be argued that under which succumbed Greece was no less terrible: it was even more. (Polybius XXXVIII, 1:1–4)

> Great was probably the fear that gripped the whole of Greece when Xerxes crossed from Asia to Europe, but if all people were in danger, indeed, he died only a few people, and the disaster brought mainly the Athenians, who, by a wise forecast of the future, had left their city with their wives and children. (Polybius, XXXVIII, 2:1–3)

> In the past the Greeks had already suffered setbacks or complete disaster, either as a result of their differences, or the aggression of some despot, but at the time we are talking about it was a disaster in every sense of the term struck them, through the fault of a few leaders of their own foolish and blind. (Polybius XXXVIII, 16:8–9)

In 146 BCE, the revolt of Corinth, fomented by Critolaus and Diaios, sealed the ruin of all Greece. A conciliatory senator was sent by Rome, Sextus Julius Caesar, but he was dismissed with insults, by those two Greeks who pushed the people to rise up against Roman power. Finally, Rome sent a praetor, Quintus Caecilius Metellus, who was forced to fight and kill Critolaus, then Diaios (Polybius, XXXVIII, 9–13). It seems that this 'one Roman general' evoked in 1 Maccabees 8:10 is the very Metellus who finally managed to subdue the Greeks. This would be an anachronism of the writer of 1 Maccabees, because Judas could not 'have heard' (1 Macc. 8:1) of events taking place twenty years later.[36]

Praises of the Roman constitution by Polybius and 1 Maccabees 8

The Roman bias in 1 Maccabees is reminiscent of the praise of the Roman constitution by Polybius. Indeed, 1 Maccabees 8 tells that Judas had heard that the Romans judged righteously, in the form of a senate. However, 1 Maccabees makes the mistake of thinking that one man had the power annually, while indeed two consuls shared it. Despite this apparent error, 1 Maccabees agrees with Polybius on the idea that the Roman constitution is balanced and does not allow the exaltation of a man or group over another. Moreover, Polybius testifies that the Roman constitution was often misunderstood by Greeks and foreigners. The author (distinct from the narrator) of 1 Maccabees may have deliberately implied that Judas 'misunderstood' how the Roman constitution functioned.

36. On this anachronism, see Bar-Kochva, *Judas Maccabeus*, 164. For Bar-Kochva, this mistake and the inaccurate praise of Roman constitution are evidence that the author of 1 Macc. relied on oral accounts rather than on written sources.

Those whom they wish to help and to make kings, they make kings, and those whom they wish they depose; and they have been greatly exalted. Yet for all this not one of them has put on a crown or worn purple as a mark of pride, but they have built for themselves a senate chamber, and every day three hundred and twenty senators constantly deliberate concerning the people, to govern them well. They trust one man each year to rule over them and to control all their land; they all heed the one man, and there is no envy or jealousy among them. (1 Macc. 8:13-16)

Besides, if any individual or state among the Italian allies requires a controversy to be settled, a penalty to be assessed, help or protection to be afforded, – all this is the province of the Senate. Or again, outside Italy, if it is necessary to send an embassy to reconcile warring communities, or to remind them of their duty, or sometimes to impose requisitions upon them, or to receive their submission, or finally to proclaim war against them, – this too is the business of the Senate. In like manner the reception to be given to foreign ambassadors in Rome and the answers to be returned to them, are decided by the Senate. With such business the people have nothing to do. Consequently, if one were staying at Rome when the Consuls were not in town, one would imagine the constitution to be a complete aristocracy: and this has been the idea entertained by many Greeks, and by many kings as well, from the fact that nearly all the business they had with Rome was settled by the Senate.

(Polybius, VI, 13:6–9)

Accordingly, the peculiar constitution of the State makes it irresistible, and certain of obtaining whatever it determines to attempt. Nay, even when these external alarms are past, and the people are enjoying their good fortune and the fruits of their victories, and, as usually happens, growing corrupted by flattery and idleness, show a tendency to violence and arrogance, – it is in these circumstances, more than ever, that the constitution is seen to possess within itself the power of correcting abuses. For when any one of the three classes becomes puffed up, and manifests an inclination to be contentious and unduly encroaching, the mutual interdependency of all the three, and the possibility of the pretensions of any one being checked and thwarted by the others, must plainly check this tendency: and so the proper equilibrium is maintained by the impulsiveness of the one part being checked by its fear of the other.

(Polybius, VI, 18:4–8)

The 'Peace of Apamea' between Rome and Antiochus III, and the alliance between Rome and Judas

Polybius reports that Antiochus III was defeated by the Romans, and he negotiated with them the conditions for maintaining his sovereignty over the Seleucid kingdom. It is referred to as the treaty of the 'Peace of Apamea'. Note that among the hostages Antiochus III left in Rome was his son, who became Antiochus IV Epiphanes, the very one that the Maccabees fought.

> There shall be perpetual peace between Antiochus and the Romans if he fulfils the provisions of the treaty. Neither Antiochus nor any subject to him shall allow any to pass through their territories to attack the Romans or their allies, nor supply them with aught. Neither shall the Romans or their allies do the like for those attacking Antiochus or those subject to him. Antiochus shall not wage war upon the Islanders or the dwellers in Europe. He shall evacuate all cities and territory (this side of Taurus). His soldiers shall take nothing out with them except the arms they are carrying. If they chance to have taken anything away they shall restore it to the same cities. He shall receive neither soldiers nor other men from the territory of king Eumenes. If there be any men in the army of Antiochus coming from any of the cities taken over by the Romans, he shall deliver them up at Apameia … Antiochus shall pay to the Romans ten thousand talents, in ten yearly instalments, of the best Attic silver, each talent to weigh not less than eighty Roman pounds, and ninety thousand medemni of corn. Antiochus shall pay to king Eumenes three hundred and fifty talents in the five years next following, in yearly instalments of seventy talents; and in lieu of the corn, according to the valuation of Antiochus himself, one hundred and twenty-seven talents, two hundred and eight drachmae, which sum Eumenes has consented to accept 'as satisfying his claims.' Antiochus shall give twenty hostages, not less than eighteen nor more than forty-five years old, and change them every three years. If there be in any year a deficit in the instalment paid, Antiochus shall make it good in the next year. If any of the cities or nations, against whom it has been hereby provided that Antiochus should not make war, should commence war against him, it shall be lawful for Antiochus to war with them; but of such nations and cities he shall not have sovereignty nor attach them as friends to himself. Such complaints as arise between the parties to this treaty shall be referred to arbitration. If both parties agree in wishing anything to be added to or taken from this treaty, it shall be lawful so to do.
>
> (Polybius, XXI, 42)

This passage of Polybius tells with great accuracy what 1 Maccabees 8 says in brief: Antiochus was subjected to a heavy toll to the Romans and Eumenes, and had to give hostages to the Romans (see above, 1 Macc. 8:6-8). Moreover, in addition to corresponding with the verses on Antiochus III, the treaty between Rome and Antiochus III in Polybius presents clear similarities with that reported in the following verses of 1 Maccabees 8:

> So Judas chose Eupolemus the son of John, son of Accos, and Jason the son of Eleazar, and sent them to Rome to establish friendship and alliance, and to free themselves from the yoke; for they saw that the kingdom of the Greeks was completely enslaving Israel. They went to Rome, a very long journey; and they entered the senate chamber and spoke as follows: 'Judas, who is also called Maccabeus, and his brothers and the people of the Jews have sent us to you to establish alliance and peace with you, that we may be enrolled as your allies and friends.' The proposal pleased them, and this is a copy of the letter

> which they wrote in reply, on bronze tablets, and sent to Jerusalem to remain with them there as a memorial of peace and alliance: 'May all go well with the Romans and with the nation of the Jews at sea and on land forever, and may sword and enemy be far from them. If war comes first to Rome or to any of their allies in all their dominion, the nation of the Jews shall act as their allies wholeheartedly, as the occasion may indicate to them. And to the enemy who makes war they shall not give or supply grain, arms, money, or ships, as Rome has decided; and they shall keep their obligations without receiving any return. In the same way, if war comes first to the nation of the Jews, the Romans shall willingly act as their allies, as the occasion may indicate to them. And to the enemy allies shall be given no grain, arms, money, or ships, as Rome has decided; and they shall keep these obligations and do so without deceit. Thus on these terms the Romans make a treaty with the Jewish people. If after these terms are in effect both parties shall determine to add or delete anything, they shall do so at their discretion, and any addition or deletion that they may make shall be valid.' (1 Macc. 8:17-30)

The peace treaty between Rome and Antiochus III presents the most striking similarities with the alliance treaty signed by the Jews with Rome. Both treaties provide for mutual assistance against an enemy of the other party, who would not let him through the territory or provide material aid. Both treaties are concluded on the ability to change or add certain clauses at will. Most probably, Rome offered this type of treaty to any country that showed obedience; therefore this treaty in 1 Maccabees 8 might well be authentic. However, the entire chapter 8 of 1 Maccabees summarizes, in a few words, the events that brought Rome to become the new great power in the Mediterranean world, as put forward by Polybius. The author of 1 Maccabees had, without doubt, primary sources about the uprising of the Maccabees, and probably worked on behalf of a Hasmonean king, the reign of John Hyrcanus constituting a *terminus a quo*. However, this author had to refer to external sources to learn about Greek and Roman affairs, and it can be assumed, given the strong similarities presented here, that Polybius was among these sources. Neither the chronology nor the possibility of the dissemination of Polybius' work are problematic – yet biblical criticism has rarely dared assert that a biblical book was directly inspired by a Greek or 'pagan' author.

The usurpation of Alexander Balas

Polybius tells how Demetrius was dethroned by Alexander Balas, who called himself the son of Antiochus IV, and pretended to be the legitimate heir to the throne of Seleucia. Balas was introduced to the Romans and won their support. 1 Maccabees tells that he then went to Syria (1 Macc. 10:1-4), and gained the support of the Jews by offering Jonathan the title of high priest (1 Macc. 10:15-21). Demetrius tried to make larger offers, but the Jews chose the party of Alexander Balas (1 Macc. 10:46-50).

> Heracleides came to Rome in the middle of summer, bringing Laodice and Alexander, and stayed there a long time, employing all the arts of cunning and corruption to win the support of the Senate. (Polybius XXXIII, 15:1–2)

> Many different embassies having come to Rome, the Senate admitted Attalus, son of king Eumenes I … Demetrius also came at this time, and, after receiving a fairly good reception for a boy, returned home. Then Heracleides entered the Senate, bringing Laodice and Alexander with him. The youthful Alexander first addressed the Senate, and begged the Romans 'to remember their friendship and alliance with his father Antiochus, and if possible to assist him to recover his kingdom; or if they could not do that, at least to give him leave to return home, and not to hinder those who wished to assist him in recovering his ancestral crown.' … But the majority had fallen under the spell of Heracleides's cunning, and were induced to pass the following decree: 'Alexander and Laodice, children of a king, our friend and ally, appeared before the Senate and stated their case; and the Senate gave them authority to return to the kingdom of their forefathers; and help, in accordance with their request, is hereby decreed to them.' (Polybius XXXIII, 18:1–14)

In both 1 Maccabees 10 and Polybius, Demetrius and Alexander tried to seduce either the Romans or the Jews by words. Alexander's party prevailed in both narratives, as the Roman senate granted Alexander's wish to return to Syria, and as Jonathan and the Jews preferred Alexander over Demetrius. Polybius himself had helped Demetrius I, father of Demetrius II discussed here, to flee from Rome. Polybius demonstrates here his support for Demetrius II, and regrets that the Senate had been convinced by Heracleides in favour of Alexander. Similarly, the author of 1 Maccabees seems to denounce Jonathan's appointment as high priest by Alexander for having sided with the highest bidder. Upon a careful reading of 1 Maccabees 10, it appears that Demetrius' offers were more in the interest of the Jews, but Jonathan seems to have been more attracted by Alexander's offer to be appointed high priest. Ironically, Jonathan is made high priest by the (alleged) son of Antiochus IV – which is a form of opportunistic betrayal of Judas' ideals. If 1 Maccabees seems to magnify the heroic liberation of the Jews by the Maccabees, it does contain a note of criticism against any form of Jewish monarchy[37] – much as do the books of Samuel and Kings: David and Solomon seem to be praised as heroes of Israel's golden age, but upon a closer reading, they are held responsible for the eventual schism of Israel.[38]

37. Jacques Cazeaux, *La Guerre Sainte n'aura pas lieu*, Lectio Divina 185 (Paris: Cerf, 2001).
38. Jacques Cazeaux, *Saül, David, Salomon – La royauté et le destin d'Israël*, Lectio Divina 193 (Paris: Cerf, 2003).

Conclusions

Beyond these stories, we do not find further parallels between 1 Maccabees and Polybius, since the last books of Polybius are fragmentary, and the concluding stories in 1 Maccabees 11–16 cover a period subsequent to that of Polybius' *Histories*. In conclusion, the parallels displayed here, which are probably not exhaustive, suggest the possibility that the author of 1 Maccabees relied, among other sources, upon Polybius. In the Greek and Roman world, every significant subsequent writer, such as Livy and Plutarch, considered Polybius as the most reliable and indispensable source about the Punic Wars and the Macedonian affairs, and heavily relied on his accounts to write their own histories. Obviously, Livy and Plutarch used other sources now lost to us, such as Quintus Fabius Pictor. On the other hand, Josephus Flavius himself relied on Polybius, and even compared his account of the death of Antiochus IV with that in 1 Maccabees. This means that Polybius' authority had reached a Jewish author writing in Rome in the first century CE, but it probably had reached Jewish authors before the time of Josephus, possibly in Judea. Considering that 1 Maccabees was written not before the reign of John Hyrcanus, it is not unlikely that its author relied upon Polybius, whose work had become unavoidable by the turn of the first century BCE. 1 Maccabees 8 is the chapter that seems to bear evidence of direct dependence upon Polybius. However, the author of 1 Maccabees also relied upon other sources, such as earlier biblical books, especially Judges, Samuel and Kings, regarding style and literary motifs. He also relied upon texts that have not reached us. However, the lack of comparative studies between Polybius and Maccabees seems related to a trend in biblical studies, which considers that biblical books are inspired, if not by historical truth, at least by genuine or local sources, and never by Greek or Roman sources.

As Paul Niskanen demonstrated, this trend even applies to the Book of Daniel, although it has for long been recognized as a late Hellenistic era book, and yet had not been compared with Greek authors. I thus believe that the books of Maccabees should be compared with Greek authors, probably other than Polybius (as I have hinted above, there might be typical Homeric motifs in 1 Maccabees' battle scenes). On the other hand, it seems likely that the Book of Daniel should be dated later than 165–164 BCE, allowing the consideration that Polybius was also among its sources. Finally, we may have to reconsider the historical value of the Books of the Maccabees in regard to the hypothesis that the Hebrew Bible itself was written in the Hellenistic era and relied on Greek sources.[39]

39. R. Gmirkin, *Berossus and Genesis, Manetho and Exodus: Hellenistic Histories and the Date of the Pentateuch*, CIS (London: T&T Clark, 2006); Wajdenbaum, *Argonauts of the Desert*.

11

Text and commentary
The *pesharim* of Qumran in the context of Hellenistic scholarship

Reinhard G. Kratz

Qumran and Hellenism

The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which were found between 1947 and 1956 in the caves of Khirbet Qumran and other locations in the Judean Desert, are without doubt one of the most significant discoveries of ancient Jewish manuscripts in the past century. For some years, they have been available in their entirety in the official edition in the series Discoveries in the Judaean Desert (DJD), edited by Emanuel Tov. Many tens of thousands of fragments of leather and papyrus have been found, testifying to roughly 800–1,000 Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek biblical and non-biblical documents. Since their discovery, research on the manuscripts has developed into a separate branch of scholarship, one that is also practised in Göttingen, among other things, in the Qumran Lexicon project. In addition to the critical edition of the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament, this lexicon belongs to the major long-term projects of biblical studies undertaken by the Academy of Sciences and Humanities in Göttingen.

The Dead Sea Scrolls cover a period of 400 years, from the third century BCE to the second century CE, and give us insights into the life and literature of a Jewish community, of which we were unaware until the discovery of the texts. This community has similarities with the Essenes, a group mentioned by Philo of Alexandria, Flavius Josephus and other ancient writers. However, whether or not the Qumran community was really identical with that group is, nowadays, again a matter of debate. Be that as it may, both groups are characterized by a radical way of living and thinking, which is oriented on the norms in the Torah of Moses and other biblical writings. This includes segregation from everything foreign and, in the period in which the Dead Sea Scrolls were created, segregation in particular from the Hellenistic culture, which had thoroughly permeated Judaism.

One might therefore suppose, and be confirmed in this by a cursory glance at the texts, that the Qumran community had almost nothing in common with Hellenism. But first impressions are deceptive. None other than Martin Hengel, author of the epoch-making book *Judaism and Hellenism*,[1] addressed this

1. Martin Hengel, *Judentum und Hellenismus: Studien zu ihrer Begegnung unter besonderer*

subject in an essay entitled 'Qumran and Hellenism'. Even though the subject sounds, as he himself writes, like 'fire and water' or, in the language of the Qumran texts, like 'light and darkness' or 'truth and lies', Hengel calls attention to a number of significant points of contact. This ranges from the social structure of the community to central religious and anthropological concepts. After taking all these into account, he concludes that the Qumran community was virtually a 'paradigm of how the "Hellenization" of Judaism did not exclude even the harshest opponents of the Greek spirit'.[2] Or, in other words, even in dissociation from Hellenism it asserted its influence on the Qumran community.

This could also apply to a genre, not mentioned by Martin Hengel in his article: the genre of commentary. One of the many surprises of the Dead Sea Scrolls was that two almost complete copies and other fragments of a total of fifteen to twenty commentaries on the Prophets and the Psalms came to light. These are the oldest known Bible commentaries, which originated in the first century BCE and were copied until the first century CE. They are identified by the Hebrew term *pesher*, or *pesharim* (plural), which occurs in the texts and means 'interpretation' or 'exegesis'.[3]

These *pesharim* are the subject of this chapter, and specifically from the particular perspective of 'Qumran and Hellenism'. The genre of the *pesharim* is normally explained in their ancient oriental and Jewish contexts, which indeed lie closest at hand. But for this volume on 'The Bible and Hellenism', I would, however, like to focus my attention on the Hellenistic–Roman environment and pursue an issue which has been given little discussion until now, concerning how the *pesharim* relate to the Greek and Latin commentaries on pagan literature, which were handed down or written at the same time.[4] The explosive nature of

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Berücksichtigung Palästinas bis zur Mitte des 2. Jh.s v. Chr., 2nd edn (Tübingen: Mohr, 1973).

2. Martin Hengel, 'Qumran und Hellenismus', *Judaica et Hellenistica: Kleine Schriften* I (Tübingen: Mohr, 1996), 258–94, quotations 258 and 294: '*Paradigma dafür, daß die "Hellenisierung" des Judentums auch die schroffsten Gegner des griechischen Geistes nicht ausschloß*.'
3. Critical editions: Maurya P. Horgan, *Pesharim: Qumran Interpretations of Biblical Books* (Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1979); *idem*, 'Pesharim', *Pesharim, Other Commentaries and Related Documents*, James H. Charlesworth (ed.), vol. 6B, *The Dead Sea Scrolls* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002).
4. See, as an exception, Markus Bockmuehl, 'Qumran Commentaries in Graeco-Roman Context', Orion Center Conference, Jerusalem 2004, orion.mscc.huji.ac.il/symposiums/9th/papers/BockmuehlPaper.pdf (accessed on 2 August 2012); *idem*, 'The Making of Gospel Commentaries', *The Written Gospel*, Markus Bockmuehl & Donald A. Hagner (eds) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 274–95; *idem*, 'The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Origins of Biblical Commentary', *Text, Thought and Practice in Qumran and Early Christianity*, Ruth A. Clements & Daniel R. Schwartz (eds) (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 3–29. After closing the manuscript, a special fascicle on *pesharim* and commentary has appeared in *Dead Sea Discoveries* 19(3) (2012), which deals with both the ancient Near Eastern and the Hellenistic background. Despite the misunderstanding

the issue lies in the fact that, according to their own norms and self-presentation, the Qumran community should not show any signs of Hellenistic education or training; yet their norms and self-presentation are substantially one with the methods of Hellenistic school tradition.

I will approach the relationship between the *pesharim* and pagan commentaries by first comparing their formal shape. I will then discuss their content and techniques of interpretation and, finally, their hermeneutic concept. To avoid any misunderstanding, it should be emphasized that I am primarily only concerned with a phenomenological comparison, working out similarities and differences. The question of whether or not there are historical connections will be posed separately and addressed later.

The formal shape of the commentaries

Let us begin with a modern example and take – more or less randomly – the commentary by Lothar Perlitt on the Minor Prophets, Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah, which was published in the series Altes Testament Deutsch.[5]

The biblical text in this commentary is printed in bold first, as in Nahum 3:1: 'Ah! City of bloodshed, utterly deceitful, full of booty – no end to the plunder.'[6] Perlitt translates this slightly differently: 'Woe the bloody city, everything about her "lies and deception": (long since) full of booty, (but) the robbery doesn't stop!'[7] The translation itself includes a set of explanations, found partly in the commentary's footnotes and partly marked by specific characters (apostrophes, brackets), which steer text comprehension in a certain direction. What the translation does not do is identify the terrible 'bloody city'. Which city is referenced? The Whore of Babylon or Rome, Samaria or Jerusalem, or – since it is a prophetic statement – perhaps one of the many metropoles of our time: Washington, Moscow or Beijing? Since the passage is not instantly understandable, it is worth reading Perlitt further. After the 'bold' biblical text, the 'normal font' interpretation explains the passage verse by verse. Regarding verse 1, 'Woe to the bloody city', it says: '"bloody city" is the shortest expression of Nineveh's reputation among the nations.'[8] Perlitt therefore does not identify the 'bloody city' with Babylon or Rome, Samaria or Jerusalem, nor with Washington, Moscow or Beijing, but with Nineveh, the capital of the Neo-Assyrian Empire, captured and destroyed by the Babylonians in 612 BCE. This interpretation can call on a wide

by D. Machiela (*Dead Sea Discoveries* 19: 313–62), I do not see an either–or alternative here; for the ancient Near Eastern and Jewish context, see below, with nn. 10–12.

5. Lothar Perlitt, *Die Propheten Nahum, Habakuk, Zephanja* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004).
6. Biblical quotations according to NRSV.
7. Perlitt, *Propheten*, 25: 'Wehe der Blutstadt, alles an ihr "Lug und Trug": von Beute (längst) voll, hört (doch) der Raub nicht auf'.
8. *Ibid*., 26: '"Blutstadt" ist der kürzeste Ausdruck für Ninives Ruf unter den Völkern.'

consensus in scholarship, but it is also supported by the biblical text itself. The Book of Nahum is captioned with 'An oracle concerning Nineveh', and at the end of the passage in question it says: 'Then all who see you will shrink from you and say, Nineveh is devastated' (Nah. 3:7).

The Qumran *pesharim* are shaped on very similar lines to modern commentary. First, there is a citation of a verse or a passage from the Prophets (or the Psalms of David, which were regarded as prophecy). This is then followed by the commentary, usually set apart by free space (*vacat*) or a line break. The commentary is regularly introduced by the term, which has given the genre its name: *pishro*, 'Its interpretation is' (or similarly). The commentary to our passage, Nahum 3:1-4, reads as follows:

> II 1 *Woe, city of bloodshed! All of it [deceit!] Filled with plun[der]* (Nah. 3:1) 2 Its interpretation: This is the city of Ephraim – the Seekers-After-Smooth-Things at the latter days – who walk about in deceit and false[hood.] 3 *Prey does not cease. At the sound of the whip, the rumbling sound of the wheel, the dashing horse and the bounding chariot, the horseman charging, the flash [of a sword]* 3 *and the glitter of a spear, a multitude of slain and a weight of corpses. And there is no end to carcasses, and they stumble over their carcasses* (Nah. 3:1-3). Its interpretation concerns the domination of Seekers-After-Smooth-Things; 5 the sword of the nations will not cease from the midst of their congregation. Captives, plunder, and heated strife (are) among them, and exile for fear of the enemy. And a multitude of 6 guilty corpses will fall in their days, and there will be no end to the sum-total of their slain. And in fact, they will stumble over their flesh because of their guilty counsel. 7 *(It is) because of the many harlotries of the charming harlot, the witch of sorceries, who trades nations for their harlotry and clans for their [sorcer]ies* (Nah. 3:4). 8 [Its] interpretation [con]cerns those who lead Ephraim astray – with their false teaching, their lying tongue, and deceitful lip they lead many astray – 9 the[ir] kings, princes, priests, and people, joined with the resident alien. Cities and clans will perish by their counsel; ho[no]red ones and rule[rs] 10 will fall [on account of] their [inso]lent speech. (4QpNah II:1–10)[9]

And so it continues verse by verse: first comes the biblical text (*lemma*), and after the formula *pishro* or *pishro 'al*, 'Its interpretation is, refers to' (or similar) the commentary follows. The formal distinctive characteristic compared to all other methods of interpretation, which were common in ancient Judaism[10], consists of two features: first, in the strict separation of text and commentary, and second, in the continuous commentary on biblical text. We occasionally

9. Horgan, 'Pesharim', 150–51.
10. Reinhard G. Kratz, 'Innerbiblische Exegese und Redaktionsgeschichte im Lichte empirischer Evidenz', *Das Judentum im Zeitalter des Zweiten Tempels* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006; 2nd edn 2013), 126–56; cf. further Alex P. Jassen, 'The Pesharim and the Rise of Commentary in Early Jewish Scriptual Interpretation', *Dead Sea Discoveries* 19 (2012), 363–98.

encounter the *pesher* technique in other writings from Qumran, for individual quotations from the biblical writings. But only in the *pesharim* is this technique confined exclusively to a biblical, in particular, prophetic book. And only in the case of the *pesharim,* the complete or selective commentary on this one book, is the occasion and purpose of the writing expounded.

As already mentioned, the *pesher* term and technique are rooted in the ancient Near East, specifically in Mesopotamia. The Akkadian verb *pasharu*, 'resolve, explain', indicates the realm of dreams and their interpretation, and has here both therapeutic and interpretative meaning.[11] In addition, the established wording *pishirshu*, 'Its interpretation is', which is derived from the substantive *pishru*, indicates the arena of omen interpretation and divinatory scholarship.[12] We are dealing here with the interpretation of astrological and other signs. The same word is encountered as a *terminus technicus* of dream interpretation in the Hebrew Bible, in Hebrew (*patar*) in the Joseph narrative in Genesis 40–41, and in Aramaic (*peshar*) in the Daniel narratives in Daniel 2, 4 and 5. The transfer of dream interpretation to the explanation of scriptural passages is initiated in the famous writing on the wall in Daniel 5. Neither King Belshazzar nor an army of Babylonian experts were able to decipher and interpret the inscription on the wall, which was written by a supernatural hand – only Daniel, inspired by his God, could. It is immediately obvious that it is precisely the prophets' oracles that could be regarded as a riddle or mystery respectively, and likewise as an omen, which have to be explained using the *pesher* technique.

What the history of the term cannot explain, however, is the genre of running commentary. But this is exactly where contemporary pagan commentaries offer the closest parallel. What did the pagan commentaries (Greek: *hypomnema*; Latin: *comentarius*) look like? The question cannot be easily answered, because we no longer have the originals. We only know the commentaries from secondary tradition, such as marginal notes on ancient manuscripts, which are known

11. Adolph L. Oppenheim, *The Interpretation of Dreams in the Ancient Near East* (Philadelphia, PA: The American Philosophical Society, 1956), 217–20; Annette Zgoll, *Traum und Welterleben im antiken Mesopotamien* (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2006); for the wider context see Eckart Frahm, *Babylonian and Assyrian Text Commentaries: Origins of Interpretation* (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2011); for a comparison, see Uri Gabbay, 'Akkadian Commentaries from Ancient Mesopotamia and Their Relation to Early Hebrew Exegesis', *Dead Sea Discoveries* 19 (2012), 267–312, who also points out the differences and votes for a 'common social scholastic environment, in which texts or phenomena were discussed and interpreted' (*ibid.*, 312). The Hellenistic commentaries and methods of interpretation, too, seem to belong to this 'common scholastic environment'.

12. Reginald C. Thompson, *The Reports of the Magicians and Astrologers of Nineveh and Babylon in the British Museum: The Original Texts, Printed in Cuneiform Characters*, vol. 2 (London: Luzac, 1900), no. 111, 176, 221, 264, 272; see also Martti Nissinen, 'Pesharim as Divination: Qumran Exegesis, Omen Interpretation and Literary Prophecy', *Prophecy after the Prophets?: The Contribution of the Dead Sea Scrolls for the Understanding of Biblical and Extra-biblical Prophecy*, Kristin de Troyer & Armin Lange (eds) (Leuven: Peeters, 2009), 43–60.

as *scholia*. Because of this tradition, we do know that since the third century BCE, there has been an immense production of commentaries on the classical literature of antiquity: primarily on Homer, but also on tragic poets and comedy writers, and, not least, on the philosophers. Extremely difficult and demanding investigations are required to reconstruct the form and the content of the lost originals from secondary tradition.[13]

However, the papyri from Oxyrynchus in Egypt, among which passages from such commentaries were found, give us a certain impression of what the originals looked like.[14] These show that a clear structure exists, even in the pagan commentaries: first, the piece of literature, which is the subject of the commentary, is cited by a word or a whole sentence. This lemma is then followed by the commentary, separated from the citation by a full stop, colon, or space (*vacat*). The beginning and end of a citation or commentary are often marked at the start of a line with a *paragraphos* or *diple* – that is, a simple line or forked line under the relevant text-line.

I have selected two examples of commentary on the comedies of Aristophanes for comparison. Aristophanes, with his biting ridicule, is perhaps more similar to the prophet Nahum than may appear at first glance. The first example, severely damaged and reconstructed, comes from the commentary on *The Wasps*, the second from a commentary on the lost comedy *Anagyros*.

> On 'The Wasps' (Vespae 36–41)
> *The voice of an inflated pig.* He (Aristophanes) derides Cleon on his tendency to shout, he (Cleon) had in fact a poor voice. In 'The Knights' he calls him 'Paphlagonian' because he mumbles *(paphlazein)*. He had an unpleasant appearance too. *of an inflated:* of a bloated. Inflate *(presai)* is in fact bloat *(physesai)*. *The dream stinks of rotten leather.* As a leather merchant, he mocks (him). *The wicked monster has a set of scales and weighs out beef*

13. See Johannes Geffcken, 'Zur Entstehung und zum Wesen des griechischen wissenschaftlichen Kommentars', *Hermes* 67 (1932): 397–412; Franz Böhmer, 'Der Commentarius: Zur Vorgeschichte und literarischen Form der Schriften Caesars', *Hermes* 81 (1953): 210–50; also Glenn W. Most (ed.), *Commentaries = Kommentare* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999); Marie-Odile Goulet-Cazé *et al.* (eds), *Le Commentaire entre tradition et innovation* (Paris: Vrin, 2000); Wilhelm Geerlings & Christian Schulze (eds), *Der Kommentar in Antike und Mittelalter* (Leiden: Brill, 2002).
14. Marina del Fabbro, 'Il commentario nella tradizione papiracea', *Studia papyrologica* 18 (1979), 69–132; Tiziano Dorandi, 'Le Commentaire dans la tradition papyrologique: Quelques cas controversés', *Le Commentaire entre tradition et innovation*, Marie-Odile Goulet-Cazé *et al.* (eds), 15–27; Herwig Maehler, 'L'évolution matérielle de l'Hyponèma jusqu'à la basse époque: Le Cas du Poxy.856 (Aristophane) et P. Würzburg 1 (Euripide)', *Le Commentaire entre tradition et innovation*, Marie-Odile Goulet-Cazé *et al.* (eds), 29–36; Wolfgang Luppe, 'Scholia, Hypomnemata und Hypotheseis zu griechischen Dramen auf Papyri', *Der Kommentar in Antike und Mittelalter*, Wilhelm Geerlings & Christian Schulze (eds) (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 55–77; Silke Trojahn, *Die auf Papyri erhaltenen Kommentare zur Alten Komödie* (Leipzig: Saur, 2002); Francesca Schironi, 'Greek Commentaries', *Dead Sea Discoveries* 19 (2012), 399–441.

tallow. demós (tallow) is aimed at *démos* (people). *It wants the people to fall out with us*.[15]

On 'Anagyros' (Pap Oxy. 35, 2737, Fragment 1, Col. II, 35–70)
The fact that the theatres are of two different kinds, I have already said; the Lenaia, however, does not seem to be as equally glorious, perhaps because in the spring allies already come in from outside to look around and to be busy. With *'to the city'* the City-Dionysia are therefore denoted. But also what Eratosthenes says about Plato (the comic playwright), that as long as he gave the comedy (direction) to others, he achieved a good placement, but when, for the first time, he put it, (namely) the 'Rhabdouchoi', on stage himself and came fourth, he was shoved back to the Lenaia. *Singer with golden curls.* The beginning comes from Alcman. *How / That it is right to overcome these young comedy directors / poets immediately.* This is to say: That these young directors will be overcome by the other comedy directors. *The stale and tamped* (wool): soaked and then stomped again. *drunkard:* That means completely drunk.[16]

The resemblance to the formal shape of the *pesharim* is astonishing. Pagan commentaries also show a clear distinction between the given text (*lemma*, here in italics) and commentary, and offer a continuous commentary on the writings. Of course, there are also differences. Pagan commentaries do not have established wording like *pishro* to introduce the interpretation. But we do have comparable wording, such as 'that is' or 'this is to say', or occasionally an introductory

15. Trojahn, *Kommentare*, 43–4 (text conjectures according to *scholia*): '… *die Stimme eines aufgeblasenen Schweines*. Er (sc. Aristophanes) verspottet Kleon bezüglich seiner Neigung zum Schreien; er (sc. Kleon) hatte nämlich eine schlechte Stimme. In den "Rittern" nennt er ihn "Paphlagonier", weil er mit der Stimme blubbert (*paphlazein*). Er war auch in seinem Äußeren unangenehm. *eines aufgeblasenen*: eines aufgeblähten. Aufblasen (*presai*) ist nämlich aufblähen (*physesai*). *Es riecht der Traum ganz schlimm nach verfaultem Leder*. Als Lederhändler verspottet er (ihn). *Das verruchte Ungetüm hat eine Waage und wiegt Rindertalg ab*. *demós* (Talg) zielt auf *démos* (Volk). *Das Volk von uns will es entzweien*.'

16. Trojahn, *Kommentare*, 65–7 (text with conjectures) 'Daß zwar die Theater von zweierlei Art sind, habe ich gesagt; das Lenäische aber scheint nicht gleichermaßen ruhmvoll zu sein, vielleicht auch deswegen, weil im Frühling Bundesgenossen schon ankommen von außerhalb, um zu schauen und geschäftig zu sein. Mit dem "zur Stadt" werden also die Dionysien bezeichnet. Es sagt aber auch Eratosthenes über Platon (den Komödiendichter), daß, solange er anderen die Komödien (regie) übergab, er eine gute Plazierung errang, als er aber persönlich zum ersten Mal (nämlich) die "Rhabdouchoi" aufgeführt hatte und vierter geworden war, er wieder zu den Lenäen zurückgestoßen wurde. *Goldlockiger Gesangesfreund*. Von Alkman stammt der Anfang. *Wie/Daß es gerecht ist, sofort niederzuringen diese jungen Komödienregisseure/-dichter*. Das will besagen: Daß diese jungen niedergerungen werden von den anderen Komödienregisseuren… . *Die abgestandene und geworfelte* (Wolle): eingeweichte und dann wieder gestampfte. *Trunkenbold*: das heißt völlig betrunken.'

'because', which establishes the connection to a scribal mark at the relevant place in the original text and gives the reasons for it in the commentary. Then the annotated text – and this is another difference to the *pesharim* – is not quoted or annotated in its entirety, but only as need demands. But despite these differences, we cannot ignore the fact that Jewish and pagan commentaries are very similar in their formal shape. This fact calls for a comparison of the techniques of interpretation and its content.

Techniques of interpretation and content

'"Bloody city" is the shortest expression of Nineveh's reputation among the nations', writes Lothar Perlitt in his commentary on Nahum 3:1 in the ATD series. Perlitt interprets the verse according to the rules of today's conventional historical-critical method. To do this he takes a cue from the biblical text, the lemma 'bloody city', and makes a geographical and historical identification: 'bloody city' – that is, the Assyrian Nineveh at the time of the prophet Nahum in the seventh century BCE.

Using this technique – and not only this one – the modern scholar basically does nothing else than what the ancient commentators did. Pagan commentaries also give mainly linguistic and factual explanations, which deal with textual criticism, philological, exegetical, rhetorical, historical, geographic, mythological or philosophical questions that arise in the annotated text. It is therefore all about understanding the language and content, and, in addition, locating this work of ancient literature in the correct historical context.

Ancient commentators did this by making use of the techniques and rules of philology, which were applied at their time. Taking the textbook of the grammarian Dionysius Thrax, written in the second century BCE, and the accompanying *scholia*, research has reconstructed 'an ancient system of philology' (*ein altes Lehrgebäude der Philologie*), which comprises four sections: (1) the reading of a text (*anagnostikon*); (2) the text-critical clarification of difficult variants (*diorthotikon*); (3) the explanation of language and content (*exegetikon*); and (4) the literary-aesthetic, or moral-paraenetic appraisal of the work (*krisis poiematon*).[17]

In our examples from the commentaries on Aristophanes' comedies, questions from two of the four areas are discussed. The lemma in the commentary corresponds to the reading of a passage (*anagnostikon*). Everything else can be subsumed under the third heading, the *exegetikon*. Difficulties in textual tradition, which would have required a text-critical discussion and possibly the

17. Hermann C. Usener, 'Ein altes Lehrgebäude der Philologie', *Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 4 (1892), 582–648; repr., *idem*, *Kleine Schriften 2: Arbeit zur lateinischen Sprache und Literatur* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1913), 265–314; Bernhard Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe* (Basel: Reinhardt, 1987), 35–6, 139–40, also here on the alleged six sections of the system in Dionysius Thrax's textbook, which are mentioned occasionally in tradition.

production of a correct version (*diorthotikon*), were apparently not necessary for either of our passages. They are, however, covered amply in other cases, primarily in the *scholia*.[18] The fourth area, the appraisal of the work (*krisis poiematon*), is only indirectly present in the second example, which talks about the success or failure of plays and cites Eratosthenes' judgment of the comic poet Plato in this context.

The central position, however, almost everywhere is taken by the *exegetikon*, the explanation of words and objects, as the 'bloated pig' in our first example from the commentary on *The Wasps* makes clear: '*the voice of an inflated pig*: He derides Cleon on his tendency to shout … In "The Knights" he calls him Paphlagonian because he mumbles (*paphlazein*).' The identification of the 'inflated pig' as being Cleon, the social climber and rival of Pericles in the Peloponnesian War is clearly a statement in the category of historical clarification. The reference to *The Knights*, another of Aristophanes' comedies, follows the famous rule 'to explain Homer by way of Homer' (*Homeron ex Homerou saphenizein*).[19] Accordingly, Aristophanes is here explained by way of Aristophanes. The subsequent explanation of the word 'inflated', giving a synonym: '*of an inflated:* of a bloated; "inflate" (*phresai*) is in fact "bloat" (*physesai*)', or the reference to the connection between *demós* (tallow) and *démos* (people) in the comedy's text, also belongs in the category of *exegetikon*.

Similar explanations are found in the example from the commentary on *Anagyros*. Regarding the phrase 'to the city', the commentary explains performance practice and the differences between the two feasts, the Dionysia and the Lenaia, which were held in honour of the god Dionysus. Both festivals staged a contest of poets of comedy and tragedy, but the contests were not of equal status. This is clearly shown by the example of the comic poet Plato (*Plato comicus*), a contemporary of Aristophanes and Plato the philosopher. It was said that he wrote comedies and sold these to others, who then entered them into the contest under their own names. However, when Plato submitted work on his own behalf, he was less successful. The Hellenistic scholar Eratosthenes is cited as witness. Furthermore, a quotation from the ancient Greek poet Alcman is identified in Aristophanes' comedy, and two word definitions are also given here.

How do the *pesharim* of Qumran relate to all this? Are they also based on the 'ancient system of philology' from the second century BCE? Scholars have a different opinion and think of the *pesharim* in terms of the interpretation rules of Jewish tradition, known as the *middot* ('norms'). Although these were first formulated and compiled in the early rabbinic period (i.e. later), they conceptualize techniques that were applied earlier in both the biblical text itself and in the early

18. As, for example, in the commentary to Anagyros Frg. 1 col. I, 11–12, where on the lemma '*First of all*', there is a comment: 'The rest of the verse after "*first of all*" is not handed down, which says that the part of the verse which follows is unintelligible and requires conjecture.'

19. Christoph Schäublin, 'Homerum ex Homero', *Museum Helveticum* 34 (1977), 221–7; Neuschäfer, *Origenes*, 276–85.

exegesis, such as the Qumran *pesharim*.[20] Some of the *middot* – for example, the rule *Gezera shawa*, 'same statutes', synonymous with the conclusion by analogy *synkrisis pros ison* – are, however, clearly formulated in accordance with Hellenistic rhetoric and logic.[21] And this raises the question of whether or not early interpretations already show the influence of the 'ancient system of philology', or at least certain analogies.

We should really now go through all the areas of the 'ancient system' systematically, and keep a lookout for examples of the *pesharim*. As this is not possible within the short scope of this chapter, I shall limit myself to some general remarks and a few examples. In general, the *pesharim* explain their reference text from a completely different perspective than do pagan commentaries. The commentaries are written from the perspective of an outsider, whose stated goal is the elucidation of the author's difficult passages. The *pesher*, on the other hand, is written from the perspective of those involved, whose goal is the endorsement and appropriation of the annotated text. Therefore, the *pesharim* do not address text problems, but events and expectations, which directly concern the Qumran community. The *pesharim* do not discuss the reference text, but comment on the Qumran community and their role in the text, which requires interpretation.

But regardless of such fundamental differences in content and hermeneutics, the *pesharim* make use of techniques that are encountered both in the Jewish tradition of interpretation and in the 'ancient system of philology' and pagan commentaries. I will illustrate this point using the explanation of the 'bloody city', described in Nahum 3:1, as an example.

The example of Nahum 3:1

'*Woe, city of bloodshed! All of it [deceit!] Filled with plun[der]* (Nah. 3:1). Its interpretation: This is the city of Ephraim – the Seekers-After-Smooth-Things at the latter days – who walk about in deceit and false[hood.]'

The explanation of Nahum 3:1 in our *pesher* can be classified easily under the category *exegetikon*. Again, key words (the city, deceit) connect text and commentary. However, keyword connections are not the object, but the technique of interpretation. Here, too, a geographical and historical identification is made: the 'bloody city', which is the 'city of Ephraim'. In the *pesharim*, both 'Ephraim'

20. Günter Stemberger, *Einleitung in Talmud und Midrasch* (Munich: Beck, 1992), 25–40. For its application to Qumran see George J. Brooke, *Exegesis at Qumran: 4QFlorilegium in its Jewish Context* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1985); also David I. Brewer, *Techniques and Assumptions in Jewish Exegesis before 70 CE* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1992).
21. Stemberger, *Einleitung*; David Daube, 'Rabbinic Methods of Interpretation and Hellenistic Rhetoric', *Hebrew Union College Annual* 22 (1949): 239–64; *idem*, 'Alexandrian Methods of Interpretation and the Rabbis', *Essays in Greco-Roman and Related Talmudic Literature*, Henry A. Fischel (ed.) (New York: Ktav Publication House, 1977), 165–82.

and the group of the 'Seekers-After-Smooth-Things' stand for the Pharisees. Consequently, the 'city of Ephraim' is meant to be the city of Jerusalem in the first century BCE, when the Pharisees were in charge of religious and religious-political affairs.

This historical identification in the *pesher* seems miles away from what Lothar Perlitt writes in his commentary: '"Bloody city" is the shortest expression of Nineveh's reputation among the nations.' Yet both explanations are closer than appears at first glance, since both are applying the same rule, while relating it to different areas; namely, the rule of the 'ancient system of philology': *Homeron ex Homerou saphenizein*, 'to explain Homer by way of Homer.' Perlitt applies it to the Book of Nahum, in which Nineveh is mentioned three times by name (Nah. 1:1; 2:9; 3:7). The *pesher* applies it to the books of the Prophets in general, where the term 'bloody city' refers only to Jerusalem. Incidentally, both interpretations are used in modern research.

Our passage also offers a good example of word definition: '*Woe, city of bloodshed! All of it [deceit!] Filled with plun[der]*.' For the rare word 'deceit' (*kḥš*) in the reference text, the *pesher* offers a synonym: 'deceit and lies' (*kḥš wšqrym*), just as Lothar Perlitt translates the single word (*kḥš*) 'deceit' with the hendiadys 'lies and deceit'. We are dealing here with the same procedure familiar to us from the 'inflated pig' in the commentary on Aristophanes' *The Wasps*: '*of an inflated*: of a bloated. Inflate (*presai*) is in fact bloat (*physesai*).'

In addition to synonyms, the use of wordplay with homonyms and puns is a popular technique for defining words in the *pesharim*. Thus, in the verse we have chosen, Nahum 3:1, the rare, and perhaps even for the *pesher*, strange word for 'plunder, booty' (*prq*) becomes 'lie' (*šqr*), used as a synonym for 'deceit' (*kḥš*). There is also a wordplay at the beginning of our passage: '*Woe, city of bloodshed*' is in Hebrew *hoj 'ir damim*; its interpretation 'this is the city of Ephraim' is *hi' 'ir 'efrajim*. The two expressions *hoj 'ir* and *hi' 'ir* not only sound similar, but look similar on the page. Such sound and sight puns recall the reference to the wordplay with *demós* (tallow) and *démos* (people) in the commentary on *The Wasps*.

The *pesharim* are full of such explanations of words and objects in the *exegetikon* style. In fact, at one point, the names of historical figures are given, just as in Greek commentaries. In the biblical image of lions in Nahum 2:12-13, the *pesharim* detect the names of Antiochus IV and Demetrius III. These were Seleucid kings who ruled over Palestine until 63 BCE, at which time the 'Kittim' – that is, the Romans – took power (4QpNah I:1–7). In the interpretation of the 'lion' in Nahum 2:13, under the cipher 'Lion of Wrath', we also encounter the Hasmonean king Alexander Jannaeus, who persecuted the Pharisees and crucified them alive. He is the reason for a change of text in the concluding threat of punishment in Nahum 2:14. Whereas the threat of punishment in 'See, I am against you' in the traditional (Masoretic) biblical text is aimed at a female person, probably a city, the *pesher* changes the text in citation into a masculine form. As a result, the text is revised and can be related to Alexander.

The *pesher* also offers another interesting variant within the commentary, which was probably also found in the (lost) quotation of the biblical text. Instead

of 'her (fem. sing.) chariots' (*rikhbah*) in Nahum 2:14, the *pesher* reads 'your (masc. sing.) abundance' (*robkhah*) and understands it to mean 'the multitude of his (sc. King Alexander's) army that is in Jerusalem' (4QpNah I:10). The variant could have been already created in the tradition of the biblical text used by the author of the *pesher*. However, the reference to a second person masculine suggests, rather, that the variant was caused by the 'Alexander Jannaeus' interpretation, and is therefore likely to have originated from the *pesher* author himself. This would mean, however, that a text-critical intervention was intended, not to say a conjecture in the sense of *diorthotikon*.

The *pesharim* offer a variety of similar textual variants, which deviate from the traditional (Masoretic) biblical text. Sometimes we are dealing with readings that are encountered in the Greek translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint, and sometimes with readings that are to be found nowhere else. It is not always easy to decide whether the variants result from the textual tradition of the biblical text or the manuscript of the *pesher*, or whether we are dealing with a deliberate modification or the selection of a certain reading.[22] The latter presupposes that the scribes were carrying out a text-critical discussion, analogous to that documented in pagan commentaries and *scholia* on the literature of classical antiquity, which, perhaps, we may also assume for the authors of the *pesharim*.

We now come to the last area of the 'the ancient system of philology': *krisis poiematon*, the appraisal of the work. Since evidence is not clear here, modern scholars are inconclusive regarding what this means: an evaluation and reconstruction of its genesis, or an appraisal of its literary-aesthetics or moral-paraenetic aspects. Presumably, the answer depends on which school an ancient commentator belonged to. The best known is the – probably peripatetically influenced – Alexandrian School (of Zenodotus to Aristarchus), in which a philological explanation of the text was taught. This must be distinguished from the stoic school of Pergamum (Crates of Mallos), which searched for a second, deeper meaning behind the philological and historical meaning of a text and applied the method of allegory.[23] One of the earliest pieces of evidence of the latter method is given by the commentary to orphic cosmogony in the Derveni papyrus.[24] From the second century BCE, there seems to have been an ongoing

22. George J. Brooke, 'The Biblical Texts in the Qumran Commentaries: Scribal Errors or Exegetical Variants?', *Early Jewish and Christian Exegesis: Studies in Memory of W. H. Brownlee*, Craig A. Evans & William F. Stinespring (eds) (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1987), 85–100.
23. Fritz Wehrli, *Zur Geschichte der allegorischen Deutung Homers im Altertum* (Leipzig: Noske, 1928); Rudolph Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship: From the Beginnings to the End of the Hellenistic Age* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), German translation: *Geschichte der klassischen Philologie: Von den Anfängen bis zum Ende des Hellenismus* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rohwolt-Taschenbuch-Verlag, 1970).
24. Dirk Obbink, 'Allegory and Exegesis in the Derveni Papyrus: The Origin of Greek Scholarship', *Metaphor, Allegory, and the Classical Tradition: Ancient Thought and Modern Revisions*, G. R. Boys-Stones (ed.) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 177–88; Gábor Betegh, *The Derveni Papyrus: Cosmology, Theology and Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

process of amalgamation and interaction between the two schools, not least by Dionysius Thrax.[25] This is the only way to explain the fact that the Jewish philosopher Philo of Alexandria in the first century CE applied the Pergamenian method of allegory in his exegetical writings.[26]

In the Qumran *pesharim*, we do not find any direct evidence of 'the ancient system of philology' called the *krisis poiematon*. Nowhere do the *pesharim* make any statement regarding authorship or authenticity, or the literary-aesthetic or moral value of the prophetic works they interpret, with one exception: the *pesher* on Habakkuk. This *pesher* discusses what God dictated to the prophet and what he did not make known: 'And God told Habakkuk to write down the things that are going to come upon the last generation, but the fulfilment of the period he did not make known to him' (1QpHab VII:1–2). The missing information, namely to which time and to whom the prophecy in Habakkuk refers, is only known by someone called the 'Teacher of Righteousness', a kind of 'headmaster' of the Qumran community. Of this teacher, the Habakkuk *pesher* states, 'God made known all the mysteries of the words of his servants, the prophets' (1QpHab VII:4–5; see also II:1–10).

The *pesharim* apply this knowledge of the 'Teacher of Righteousness' in the practical interpretation of the prophetic books. As a result, the philological-historical explanation of the prophets always serves the moral-paraenetical and theological teaching on the signs of the Last Days and, to a certain extent, merges with the method of the 'appraisal of the work' (*krisis poiematon*). In this respect, the affinity to the allegorical interpretation of the Pergamenian and late Alexandrian school is obvious.[27] In both cases, the philological-historical explanation of Alexandrian origin is subordinated to the paraenetical, philosophical or theological interpretation and personal appropriation of the reference text. Apart from Philo's biblical commentaries, the next parallels are the philosophical commentaries, especially those of Neoplatonic origin. Just like Jewish and Christian commentaries of late antiquity, these take on increasingly religious overtones and are 'regarded as pious works'.[28]

25. Neuschäfer, *Origenes*, 216–18.
26. Maren R. Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); *idem*, 'Jüdische Bibelexegese im Spiegel alexandrinischer Homerforschung', *Biblische Notizen* 148 (2011), 19–33; *idem*, 'Commentary Culture in the Land of Israel from an Alexandrian Perspective', *Dead Sea Discoveries* 19 (2012), 442–63. The same applies to Aristobulus, the 'first Jewish "philosopher" in Alexandria' in the second century BCE, of whom we admittedly know very little; cf. Hengel, *Judentum und Hellenismus*, 295–307.
27. Bockmuehl, 'Qumran Commentaries', 15–19; *idem*, 'Making', 280–82; *idem*, 'Dead Sea Scrolls', 19–27. For a further evaluation of this aspect see Armin Lange & Zlatko Pleše, 'The Qumran Pesharim and the Derveni Papyrus: Transpositional Hermeneutics in Ancient Jewish and Ancient Greek Commentaries', *The Dead Sea Scrolls in Context: Integrating the Dead Sea Scrolls in the Study of Ancient Texts, Languages, and Cultures*, Armin Lange, Emanuel Tov & M. Weigold (eds), 2 vols (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 895–922.
28. Ilsetraut Hadot, 'Der fortlaufende philosophische Kommentar', *Der Kommentar in*

Our passage from the *pesher* Nahum, again, is a good example: '*Woe, city of bloodshed! All of it [deceit!] Filled with plun[der]* (Nah. 3:1). Its interpretation: This is the city of Ephraim – the Seekers-After-Smooth-Things at the latter days – who walk about in deceit and false[hood.]' Unlike the pagan commentaries, the historical and geographical information in the *pesher* is not expressed directly, but as a sobriquet: the 'city of Ephraim' is in reality Samaria but in the context of the *pesharim*, it can only mean Jerusalem, the centre of the Pharisees. Jerusalem is thus equated with Samaria, the capital of the former northern kingdom of Israel, which is regarded in biblical tradition as being the epitome of idolatry. While the pagan commentaries are only concerned with providing historical information, the *pesher* connects historical information with theological evaluation.

Yet, despite its affinity to moral-paraenetical purposes, it is difficult to describe the *pesharim* interpretations as being allegorical, and to put them on a par with the biblical commentaries of Philo of Alexandria, or with pagan commentaries such as the Derveni papyrus. The *pesharim* not only apply a different method of interpretation, but also follow hermeneutics of their own.

The hermeneutics

The hermeneutics underlying the *pesharim* consist of an interaction between philological-historical explanation and theological interpretation. It is this interplay that gives the Qumran *pesharim* their special attraction. The interplay is based on the concept of the Habakkuk *pesher*, already mentioned above; that is, the idea of the 'Teacher of Righteousness' and his initial special revelation. The differentiation of what God dictated to the Prophet Habakkuk – according to the biblical tradition in the seventh century BCE – on 'the last generation', and what he did not tell him but only made known later to the 'Teacher of Righteousness' in the second century BCE, does not mean a differentiation of two levels of meaning, as in allegorical interpretation. One would overburden the relevant statements in the Habakkuk *pesher* (col. II and VII), if not misunderstand them, if one were to recognize a double meaning in God's dictated prophecies, a literal (historical) sense for the seventh century BCE and a deeper, figurative meaning for the second century BCE. For, in the opinion of the Habakkuk *pesher*, God's words as written down by the prophets, and God's words from the mouth of the 'Teacher of Righteousness' and the divinely inspired priest, all say the same thing; namely, 'the things that are going to come during the last generation' (1QpHab II, 7; VII, 1–2).

The 'mysteries of the words of his servants, the prophets' that God is said to have made known only to the 'Teacher of Righteousness', and not to the prophet Habakkuk himself, do not affect the understanding of 'the things that are going to come in the last generation'. It does, however, affect the question of who is meant by 'the last generation'; i.e. both the point of time and those to whom

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Antike und Mittelalter, Wilhelm Geerlings & Christian Schulze (eds) (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 183–99, quotation 198.

God's words in the Book of the Prophet refers. Not the meaning of words, but the temporal reference point is in question, as the commentary on the cryptic verse Habakkuk 2:3 says about the 'vision concerning the appointed time' and 'the end': 'Its interpretation is that the latter End-time will be prolonged, and it will be greater than anything of which the prophets spoke, for the mysteries of God are awesome' (1QpHab VII, 7–8). Only in passing do I mention Daniel 9 as well, where the same problem concerning the seventy years of Jeremiah (Jer. 25:12; 29:10; 2 Chron. 36:21) is handled by extending the period to seven weeks of years; that is, seven times seventy years (Dan. 9:2, 24). Again, a literal and a transferred meaning of the prophetic word cannot be differentiated here; it is more a case of Daniel being told the only correct meaning of the unintelligible prophetic words by means of a new revelation.[29]

If we apply the hermeneutical principle that relates the Habakkuk *pesher* to the other *pesharim*, this would mean that these are based on the revelation of the 'Teacher of Righteousness' concerning 'the mysteries of the words of his servants, the prophets', and the interpretation, in this respect, is supposed to be divinely inspired. Accordingly, both the prophetic reference text (i.e. the lemma) and the anonymous commentary are regarded as being inspired. Both are authorized by God himself and the headmaster, the 'Teacher of Righteousness', and both are regarded as binding in the highest degree. This status of text and commentary, as well as a high degree of commitment, are necessary, because the *pesharim* not only provide philological-historical explanations, but also intend these explanations to make theological interpretations and appraisals of their own time as the Last Days, where the things happen 'that are going to come upon the last generation'.

We do not know who the 'Teacher of Righteousness' really was, and what the revelation about him and its disclosure to the Qumran community were all about. Presumably, the 'teacher' is a literary, fictional character, who is introduced as an (already deceased) authority, in order to attribute the teachings of the community to a fundamental divine revelation and legitimize them. But we know from the prehistory of *pesher* interpretation that it has something to do with divine inspiration, even without the 'Teacher of Righteousness'. Both the interpretation of dreams or riddles and the science of omens and divinatory scholarship of Mesopotamia, where the term '*pesher*' originates, are based on the assumption that correct interpretation is only possible by using the right mixture of expertise, learned techniques and divine inspiration or revelation. The biblical stories of Joseph and Daniel make the same assumption for the interpretation of dreams and riddles as does the Qumran *pesharim* for the interpretation of the prophetic words, which, according to the Habakkuk *pesher*, is based on the divine revelation of the 'Teacher of Righteousness'.

Furthermore, the idea that both biblical reference text and commentary are inspired is connected to the fact that the *pesharim* are anonymous and do not mention the name of an author. The author of the reference text is, of course, the prophet, whose name has been handed down in the biblical book. Even he,

29. Kratz, 'Innerbiblische Exegese', 128–35.

however, is not the real author. To a greater degree, the author is God, who has dictated his words to the prophet. The formula *pishro*, 'its interpretation', does not therefore refer to the prophet, but to the previously cited word, which, for the author of *pesharim*, is the word of God. The same applies to other biblical passages or phrases that are used or quoted occasionally within the interpretation, in order to confer authority on it by being the word of God. In other words, God's word is explained by way of God's word, in accordance with the rule 'explain Homer by way of Homer' (*Homeron ex Homerou saphenizein*).

A very different self-image is presented by the commentaries on the ancient pagan classics. Here, the personalities of the authors of the annotated work and of the commentary play a central role. We refer again to the 'inflated pig': '*The voice of an inflated pig.* He (Aristophanes) derides Cleon on his tendency to shout … In "The Knights" he (Aristophanes) calls him "Paphlagonian" because he mumbles (*paphlazein*).' Here, as in the example of the commentary on Anagyros, authors and informants are named and cited.[30] Biographical notes are included, as well as information on the creation and performance of a work.

The importance of the author, again, is a fundamental difference between the *pesharim* and the pagan commentaries, which is of great significance for the relationship between biblical and Greco-Roman literature as a whole. In the *pesharim*, authors retreat behind the word of God. Discussions are conducted implicitly, and only divine truths are communicated explicitly. In the pagan commentaries, by contrast, interest in the author's personality, his views and intentions predominate. Pagan commentary claims that with its scholarly techniques, it makes the annotated work accessible in its time and in its self-image. The *pesher*, as we have seen, makes use of the same scholarly techniques in some cases. It claims, however, to make the meaning of the annotated work accessible for the self-image of the interpreter and reader in their time; only in doing so are the work and its importance understood correctly and fully appreciated. Both are concerned with the truth of a literary work. The pagan commentary, however, is only interested in the truth of the past, the *pesher* in the truth of the present and future, in which the truth of the past is also seen. The *pesharim* are thus based on a hermeneutical approach that allows the text and the prophecies of the prophetic books, like the pagan commentaries, not only to be reproduced in the right way, but also to be reformulated in their own way.

Once again: Qumran and Hellenism

Jewish *pesher* and pagan commentary: are they 'fire and water' or 'light and darkness', or do the analogies indicate another point of contact in the complex and intricate relationship between Qumran and Hellenism? As announced at the beginning of this chapter, this subject will be mentioned once more in my final remarks, when possible historical connections between pagan commentaries and *pesherim* will be briefly discussed. The issue is whether analogies that we

30. Trojahn, *Kommentare*, 62–8, 158–9.

have observed suggest that the *pesharim* are directly influenced by or literarily dependent on 'the ancient system of philology' and the pagan commentaries from the Hellenistic–Roman period, or whether they have nothing to do with each other and represent independent development.

Historical connections are here, as elsewhere, difficult to prove. I do not exclude a direct influence completely. Not only Hebrew and Aramaic, but also Greek and Latin texts have been found at the Dead Sea, and these are not just biblical texts, but also fragments of pagan literature.[31] This indicates that Hellenism did not spare the manuscripts from the Judean desert.

The scribal schools and other educational institutions in Hellenized Judah are possible places of encounter and exchange between Judaism and Hellenism. A large proportion of the members of the Qumran community came from the educated classes. Among them were certainly scribes, who passed through these educational institutions. It is perfectly possible that here they became acquainted with the kind of scholarly commentary influenced by the Alexandrian or Pergamenian schools.

As far as education and teaching in Qumran are concerned, scholarship usually refers to the reports by Philo of Alexandria and Flavius Josephus on the Essenes and Therapeutae.[32] These reports show clearly a Hellenistic influence and yet, for various reasons, they are to be used with great reservation. One should also be cautious of speculation about an 'École de Qumran' (A. Lemaire). But there are numerous pieces of archaeological and textual evidence that indicate that a professional study of the scriptures was carried out and practised in the Qumran community – and not only in the settlement of Khirbet Qumran, but certainly at other locations as well.[33] Although it is most unlikely that pagan literature and their commentaries were studied in scriptural interpretation in Qumran, it is still possible that the appropriate techniques were taught and practised here.

Conversely, one could argue that the *pesher* method can be adequately derived from the history of the *pesher* term in the ancient Near East and in Judaism. This is undoubtedly true, but it does not explain why the genre of the running commentary occurs suddenly, of all times, in the first century BCE, and – as far as we know – for the first time in Qumran. It must be remembered that the *pesharim* focus on the Prophets and the Psalms, which – incidentally in the New Testament as well – were regarded as prophetic. The *pesharim* thus supplemented the Halakha, the interpretation of Jewish law, which had probably been practised for much longer. The Halakha represents another root for the genus of the commentary.

There were definitely internal reasons in Judaism and in the Qumran community for the need to interpret the Prophets alongside the Torah of Moses.

31. Bockmuehl, 'Dead Sea Scrolls', 20 n. 58.
32. Bockmuehl, 'Qumran Commentaries', 15–17; *idem*, 'Dead Sea Scrolls', 21–2.
33. Annette Steudel, '"Bereitet den Weg des Herrn": Religiöses Lernen in Qumran', *Religiöses Lernen in der biblischen, frühjüdischen und frühchristlichen Überlieferung*, Beate Ego & Helmut Merkel (eds) (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 99–116.

However, the inspiration for the choice of the genre of the running commentary and the techniques of interpretation could very well have also come from 'the ancient system of philology' and the pagan commentaries. If this is indeed the case, then the *pesharim* of Qumran are also evidence of the confrontation between Judaism and Hellenism, and should be considered further evidence of the fact that 'the "Hellenization" of Judaism did not exclude even the harshest opponents of the Greek spirit'.

12

Josephus in the tents of Shem and Japheth

The status of ancient authors in Josephus' treatise *Against Apion* 1.1–218

Ingrid Hjelm

Introduction: antiquity, reputation and status

Josephus' apologetic treatise *Against Apion* was written sometime between his publication of *Jewish Antiquities* in 93/94 CE and his death around 100 CE. It is a matter of dispute whether the piece could have been written under the severe proscriptions against Jewish lifestyle, and the hostile and illegal treatment of the Jewish population and their sympathizers during Domitian's reign (96 BCE), or whether it reflects, rather, the cessation of such, and the condemnation of Domitian during the reigns of Nerva (96–8 CE) and Trajan (98–117 CE).[1] Josephus' *Against Apion* was most commonly known under the title 'Concerning the Antiquity of the Jews' (Περι ἀρχαιότητος Ἰουδαίων), which was also the primary concern of his *Jewish Antiquities* (*Ant*. 1.13, 16, 82–8). Josephus sought to establish this perception through discussion and citations from Egyptian (Manetho), Phoenician (Dios, Menander and Philostratus), Babylonian (Berossus) and Greek witnesses (Pythagoras, Theophrastus, Herodotus, Choerilus, Clearcus, Hecataeus and Agatharchides) plus additional references to still eleven lesser-known Greek authors (*Ap.* 1.6–218). The remainder of *Apion* is a rebuttal of anti-Jewish propaganda propagated by Manetho and a few Greek authors (1.219–320), the most prominent of which are the Alexandrian scholars Chaeremon (*c*.10–80 CE; *Ap*. 1.288–303) and Apion who died around 50 CE (*Ap*. 2.1–144). The work concludes with a lengthy laudation of the Jewish legislator Moses and his constitution, as a reply to Apollonius Molon and others (*Ap.* 2.145–86), and with a short summary and dedication.

Apion was the head of the Alexandrian Academy; he conducted a famous lecture tour to Greece during the years 37–41 CE (Seneca *Ep.* 88.40). He also headed the Alexandrian delegation to Gaius Caligula in Rome around 40 CE, with the purpose of settling a civil strife between Greek and Jewish inhabitants of Alexandria (*Ant*. 18.257–60). Apion's accusation of Jewish impiety in regard

1. See further the discussion in John M. G. Barclay, *Against Apion: Translation and Commentary*, *Flavius Josephus. Translation and Commentary*, vol. 10, Steve Mason (ed.) (Leiden: Brill, 2007), xxvi–xxviii.

to Roman religion moved Gaius to an outright dismissal of the Jewish delegation, headed by Philo, and an order of persecution and punishment of any Jew who would not follow suit and worship the emperor as a god. Less mentioned by Josephus, but highly important for instigating Roman prejudice against the Jews, is Chaeremon, who probably headed a similar delegation to meet Claudius in 41 CE, where he complained about the disturbances in Alexandria caused by the Judaean population there (*CPJ* 153, line 17).[2] Chaeremon's and Apion's adaptations of Manetho's stories about the Jews depicted Judaism as nothing but an aberrant Egyptian religion (*Ap*. 1.290; 2.10–12; 2.8–32), promoted by Moses and Joseph, who led all those with impurities out of Egypt to be driven into Syria.[3] Their claims were serious in regard to the respect afforded the Jewish population in the Roman Empire. If their religion was a latecomer, neither ancient nor pure, they could not obtain respect or philosophical justification for their peculiar customs.[4] Well versed in both Egyptian history and religion as well as Stoic philosophy, Chaeremon was a leading teacher of both in Alexandria and Rome. His analyses of ancient religions for signs of original human wisdom were decisive for the Empire's treatment of its subjected peoples.[5] Within the prevailing Stoic system, antiquity and authenticity meant everything for a positive evaluation of a tradition's origin in the oldest roots of human wisdom.[6] Josephus' refutation of these scholars had wide-ranging consequences at a time when a growing interest in ancient Eastern religions and literary traditions challenged the authority of Greece's ancient heritage. His discussion of Jewish antiquity was not a vain competition for authenticity or an idle scholarly dispute among historians, but had significant implications for the value of his religious traditions and the standing of not only Jewish, but also Samaritan and Christian peoples within the Roman Empire. It is therefore no surprise that he opens *Against Apion* with questions of antiquity and authenticity in regard to both historiography and religion. These were burning questions of his day as well as a more general anti-ethnic polemic in the writings of Josephus' fellow Roman historians and writers of the first century CE, such as Seneca, Quintilian, Frontinus, Martial, Tacitus and Juvenal.[7] Tacitus, who has the most to say about

2. M. Frede, *Charemon der Stoiker*, ANRW II.36.3, 2067–2103; cf. Barclay, *Against Apion*, 153, n. 973. According to Jos. *Ant*. 19.278–309, Jewish rights were restored during Claudius' reign. Tacitus in his *Historiae*, 5.12, complains about the 'covetous temper' of the Jews that prevailed under Claudius.
3. M. Stern, 'The Jews in Greek and Latin Literature', *The Jewish People in the First Century*, S. Safrai, M. Stern *et al.* (eds), CRINT, vol. II (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1976), 1101–59 (1115–16).
4. L. H. Feldman, *Jew and Greek in the Ancient World: Attitudes and Interactions from Alexander to Justinian* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University, 1993), 177–200.
5. G. Boys-Stones, *Post Hellenistic Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); cf. Barclay, *Against Apion*, 153, n. 973.
6. Barclay, *Against Apion*, 93; Boys-Stones, *Philosophy*, 44–95.
7. Stern, 'The Jews', 1150–58; *idem*, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, 3 vols (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1970), vol. II, 1–5; Barclay, *Against Apion*, xl–xliv; E. S. Gruen, *Diaspora: Jews amidst Greeks and Romans*

the Jews,[8] however, wrote his *Historiae* in the first decade of the second century CE, so it is rather whether Josephus influenced him, than the other way around.[9] Roman writers are not addressed directly in Josephus' *Against Apion* and *Jewish Antiquities*. Their role as discussion partners is only in the function of implicit audience, as Josephus is very cautious not to address Roman issues or authors directly, but rather discusses (with) non-Roman authors of the past.[10]

Josephus' opening statement in *Apion* recaptures his *Jewish Antiquities* as the primary proof of the antiquity and superiority of the Jewish people and their ancient writings:[11]

> Through my treatise on Ancient History [ἀρχαιολογίαν], most eminent Epaphroditus, I consider that, to those who will read it, I have made it sufficiently clear concerning our people, the Judaeans, that it is extremely ancient [παλαιότατόν] and had its own original composition,[12] and how it inhabited the land that we now possess; for I composed in the Greek language a history covering 5000 years, on the basis of our sacred books. (*Ap*. 1.1)

The 5,000 years are described by Josephus in book I of his *Jewish Antiquities* (*Ant*. 1.13). It is made up of round numbers of 'a little less than 3,000 years', from creation to Moses (*Ant*. 1.82–8; *Ap*. 1.39) and 2,000 years from Moses to Josephus' own time (*Ant*. 1.16; *Ap*. 1.36; 2.226). Josephus' calculations in *Jewish Antiquities* are concentrated around his narration of central events in biblical narrative: the Flood (*Ant*. 1.82–8), Abraham (*Ant*. 1.148–9), the building of the temple (*Ant*. 8.61–2), the cessation of the Northern Kingdom (*Ant*. 9.280), the cessation of the Southern Kingdom (*Ant*. 10.143) and the destruction of Jerusalem's temple (10.147–8), which took place 4,513 years, six months and ten days after the creation of Adam (*Ant*. 10.148). No calculation is made in relation to Josephus' Exodus narrative, but his chronological summary in 10.147–8

(Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), 41–53; *idem*, 'Greeks and Jews: Mutual Misperceptions in Josephus' *Contra Apionem*', *Ancient Judaism in its Hellenistic Context*, C. Bakhos (ed.) (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 31–51; Tacitus's writings about Jewish origin, the first Jewish War and their relationship to writings of Josephus were originally discussed by W. Whiston in his *The Works of Josephus: Complete and Unabridged* from 1736 (updated edition; Winona Lake, IN: Hendrickson 1987), 'Dissertation 3', 827–36.

8. E. S. Gruen, *Rethinking the Other in Antiquity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011), 179–96. Both Stern 'The Jews', 1157, and Gruen argue for a more nuanced evaluation of Tacitus than simply relegating his writings to outright anti-Judaism, and take into consideration that anti-Semitic sentiments applied to Eastern culture in general.
9. Stern, 'The Jews', 1156.
10. A. Kasher, 'Polemic and Apologetic Methods of Writing in *Contra Apionem*', *Josephus' Contra Apionem. Studies in its Character and Context with a Latin Concordance in the Portion Missing in Greek*, L. H. Feldman & J. R. Levenson (eds) (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 143–86 (151–2); Barclay, *Against Apion*, xliv and 'Appendix 6: Judaism in Roman Dress?', 362–9.
11. Unless otherwise stated, I use Barclay's translation from the Brill edition 2007.
12. Cf. *Ap*. 1.36–9; 2.226.

enumerates the destruction of the temple in relation to: (a) its construction (470 years, six months and ten days); (b) the people's migration from Egypt (1,062 years, six months and ten days); (c) the Flood (1,957 years, six months and ten days); and finally the creation of mankind. Josephus' calculations are far from precise and diverge at several points, both within the *Jewish Antiquities* and compared with those in the *Jewish War* (6.437–41).[13] Their purpose is a demonstration of the antiquity of the Jewish people and its traditions, evidenced also in his detailed enumeration of the high priests from Aaron to the destruction of the temple by Titus in the closing chapters of *Jewish Antiquities* (*Ant*. 20.224–51).

Josephus' external witnesses[14] for his claim of a 2,000-year period of postdiluvian history for the Jewish people can be dated from the sixth to second centuries BCE. In *Apion*, he seeks to create the impression that he has evidence for his national history by discussing non-biblical traditions about Moses, Solomon, and the building and destruction of Jerusalem's temple, as well as events and figures from the Persian and Hellenistic periods. The evidence he creates, however, falls into the same pitfalls as those he holds against the Greek authors, namely that these were non-contemporaneous with the events they described (*Ap*. 1.13–14); they did not supply any eyewitness reports or have reliable records (1.11–12, 20–22); they based themselves on oral traditions and individual conjectures (1.15); they were not impartial (1.25); and they had no consensus on the most important matters (1.16–18, 23–7). Their practice was, in fact, 'the complete opposite of history' and Josephus takes it as 'evidence of true history, if everyone both says and writes the same things about the same [events]' (1.26). Although Josephus creates an opposition to these unreliable Greek authors and joins in the general Roman attitude of praising the more ancient records preserved by the Egyptians, Babylonians/Chaldaeans[15] and Phoenicians, his sources for these records are, in fact, contemporary or even younger than most of his Greek authors. Josephus' logic, however, lies in an appraisal of a truthful exposition (ἀκρίβεια) of ancient records, rather than a critical evaluation of these and other historical sources.

The Egyptian evidence: the Exodus

Josephus' first 'ancient' non-Greek witness is Manetho. His introduction of Manetho does not give any personal information about him, apart from his Egyptian descent, and hints at his age only by mentioning Manetho's criticism of

13. É. Nodet, *Flavius Josèphe, Les Antiquités Juives, Livre I à III* (Paris: Cerf, 1992), 5; Whiston, *Josephus*, 'Dissertation 5', 849–72.
14. Josephus' apologetic section (*Ap*. 1.69–218) has the form of a legal process and uses language derived from the courtroom; cf. Kasher, 'Polemic and Apologetic', 170–71; Barclay, *Against Apion*, xxxi.
15. Josephus variously uses both terms, even sometimes in a hendiadic way, for example, *Ap*. 1.31: 'the king of Babylon and the Chaldaeans'; 1.133: 'ruled over the Chaldaeans and the Babylonians'.

Herodotus' account of Egypt (*Ap*. 1.73). Josephus' description of Manetho mirrors his own achievements: 'a man steeped in Greek culture; as is clear: for he wrote his national history in the Greek language, having translated, as he himself says, from the sacred tablets' (1.73). This characterization is entirely positive in regard to Manetho's Hyksos narrative in the second book of his *Aegyptiaca*. Josephus interprets this narrative within the biblical Exodus tradition, in order to prove the high antiquity of the Jews, although Manetho nowhere explicitly equates the Hyksos with the Jews (1.228).[16] Correcting Manetho's explanation of *Hyksos*/*Hykoussos* as '*hyk*', meaning king, and '*sos*', meaning shepherd (1.82), Josephus refers the reader to 'another copy', which reads '*hak*', literally meaning captive, 'as seems to me more persuasive, and in line with ancient history' (1.83). Whether this is a late insertion or not,[17] the correction appears also in 1.91, with additional explanations of both the shepherd and captive themes in regard to 'our earliest ancestors', whom he subsequently calls 'shepherds'. Correlating Manetho's Egyptian history with Greek chronology, Josephus is able to conclude that Manetho's testimony has shown that the Jews were not apostate Egyptians: 'our arrival in Egypt was from elsewhere', and that they belonged to an ethnically seen independent and very old people: 'our departure from there was at such an early point in time as to pre-date the Trojan War by somewhere close to 1,000 years' (1.104). Although Josephus never gives exact dates for the Trojan War,[18] his statement bears great weight as alluding to one of Josephus' main criticisms of Greek civilization and historiography in their lack of any written document before 'Homer's poem, and he clearly lived after the Trojan events' and was transmitted orally before being written down (1.12–13). This builds up to Josephus' critique of lack of contemporaneity, when all Greek historiographers lived long after the events: 'a little before the Persian invasion of Greece' (1.13). Their ability to write reliable history is contested when their civilization lacked the ability of writing and keeping records until long after the Trojan War (1.10–11, 15–27).

The opposite of the ignorant Greek writers are the Egyptians, Babylonians, Chaldaeans and Phoenicians, all of whom kept precise records, and the Phoenicians especially 'used writing for managing daily life and for transmitting the memory of public events' (1.28). Egyptians, Babylonians and Chaldaeans were already highly esteemed witnesses of the past,[19] but Josephus sneaks in

16. For an overview of scholarly discussions about the correctness of Josephus' paraphrase and citation of Manetho, see Barclay, *Against Apion*, Appendix 1: Manetho, 335–7; R. E. Gmirkin, *Berossus and Genesis, Manetho and Exodus. Hellenistic Histories and the Date of the Pentateuch*, CIS 15 (London: T&T Clark, 2006), 170–91.
17. Cf. the discussion in Barclay, *ad loc*.
18. Diod. 1.5 dates the war to 1184, and it was usually considered the point of departure for Greek history writing. Diodorus, however, does offer examples of very high and round numbers ranging from 10,000 to 23,000 years for the mythic past in Greek and Egyptian traditions; cf. Barclay, *Against Apion*, 5, n. 13.
19. M. L. West, *Early Greek Philosophy and the Orient* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1971), 165–242; Stern, 'The Jews', 1102ff.

the Phoenicians also to justify his use of so-called Tyrian archives in 1.106–27 as proof of the historicity of his Solomon tradition. Furthermore, it reminds his readers that the Phoenicians taught the alphabet to the Greeks (cf. 1.10). This places the Greek authors on an inferior level in relation to the 'wisest individuals' (1.9) in other nations.[20]

The highest note of esteem, however, Josephus suggests, should be given to the Jewish tradition for its precision (ἀκρίβεια), carefully maintained throughout the generations by successive chief-priests (1.29) and prophets, who 'learned, by inspiration from God, what happened in the distant and most ancient past, and recorded plainly events in their own time just as they occurred' (1.37). By bringing in the theme of divine inspiration, Josephus advocates for an ultimately reliable source for the historiography of the pre-Mosaic period as recorded (by Moses) in the five books of Moses (1.39) and counters any claim that it should be contaminated by myth.[21] 'The events of their own time' refer to the prophets after Moses until 'Artaxerxes, king of the Persians after Xerxes',[22] who 'wrote the history of what took place in their own times in thirteen books' (1.40). From the time of Artaxerxes to 'our own time every event has been recorded'. These records, however, are not deemed 'worthy of the same trust', because 'the exact line' of prophets did not succeed (1.41). Josephus really shows his rhetorical skills here by mentioning the Persian king, who invaded Greece, whereby he implies that the 'biblical record is so old that it *finishes* at the time the Greek records are hardly *beginning*' (cf. 1.13).[23] However, he also admits that not all contemporary sources are reliable in regard to his own tradition, and this might be the reason that he rarely names his non-biblical Jewish sources. In contrast to the numerous ('thousands of books') and conflicting books of the Greeks (1.38; cf. 1.15–27), Josephus argues for the single harmonious canon of twenty-two books written by authorized authors ('nor is there any disagreement present in what is written'; 1.37–8).

Josephus wisely separates Manetho's following anti-Jewish assessment from his Hyksos narrative. Relegating it to slander (βλασφημία), lies (ψευδολογία) and implausible stories (ἀπίθανος)[24] based on 'myths of unknown authorship' (1.105, 229), he makes this his first object of refutation (1.227–87), before turning to a criticism of Apion and other Greek authors.

20. Barclay, *Against Apion*, 15, n. 47 and 24, n. 115.
21. *Ibid*., 29, n. 153.
22. *Ibid*., 30, n. 163: 'Josephus thought Artaxerxes (465–424 BCE) was the figure named Ahasuerus in the Book of Esther (*Ant*. 11.184ff.), taking the biblical "Artaxerxes" of Ezra–Nehemiah as Xerxes (*Ant*. 11.120ff.).'
23. Barclay, *Against Apion*, 30, n. 164.
24. Josephus uses this term seven times in *Apion*, five of which occurs in relation to his refutation of Manetho.

The Phoenician evidence: Solomon's temple

We will not deal with this part of *Apion*, but turn to Josephus' use of Phoenician sources in *Ap.* 1.106–27. The witnesses, he presents (παρατίθημι) are Dios (1.112) and Menander (1.116), both of whom he employed in *Ant*. 8.144–9, and Menander also in 8.324 and 9.283–7.[25] It is clear from his use of these authors in *Antiquities* that Menander is his primary source, and that Dios merely embellishes Menander's record. He does not give any information on this in *Apion*, or any civic information about his witnesses, apart from calling Menander 'Ephesian' (1.116). Both, in fact, lived no earlier than the second century BCE,[26] and they were largely unknown in Roman circles. In *Antiquities*, Menander is presented as 'the author of a book of Annals and translator of the Tyrian archives into the Greek language' (*Ant*. 8.283),[27] while in *Apion*, 'he wrote about the events' learning history 'from the native records of each [Greeks and non-Greeks]' (*Ap*. 1.116). Dios, who was not given any presentation in *Antiquities*, is presented as 'a man trusted for his accuracy in Phoenician history' in *Apion* (1.112).[28]

This claim for accuracy is necessary for Josephus' initial claim that 'the Tyrian documents have been written for public purposes and preserved with exceptional care', and that they contain the testimony that 'the sanctuary in Hierosolyma was built by Solomon the king 143 years and eight months earlier than the Tyrians' founding of Karchedon' (Carthage) (1.107–8). Josephus pleads credibility in regard to this testimony that 'it is not unreasonable that the construction of our sanctuary should be in their records; for *Eiromos* [Hiram], the king of the Tyrians, was a friend of our king Solomon' as was his father before him (*Ap*. 1.109; cf. *Ant*. 8.58).

In his comparison of Hiram with Solomon, Josephus – combining biblical and Tyrian sources – makes Solomon the wiser and Hiram a very generous contributor to Jerusalem's temple (*Ap*. 1.110–11). On this, Josephus rather refers to the letters they wrote to each other, 'preserved to this day among the Tyrians' (*Ap*. 1.111). In *Antiquities* 8.50–55, two such letters are quoted and claimed to have been preserved both in 'our books' and in 'the Tyrian archives'.[29] Josephus

25. For a comparison of Eupolemus, Menander, Dios and Josephus, see D. Mendels, *Identity, Religion and Historiography: Studies in Hellenistic History* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), ch. 23: 'Hellenistic Writers of the Second Century BCE on The Hiram-Solomon Relationship' (publ. also in *Studia Phoenicia* 5 [1986], 445–55).
26. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors*, vol. I, 119 and 123.
27. References to Tyrian archives and records (Τυρίων γραμματοφυλακείου/ἀρχεια) appear in *Ant*. 8.55, 144; 9.283, 287, with an admonition to consult these in 8.55. There is no evidence that Josephus did this. He rather used secondary witnesses.
28. Apart from Josephus' reference, no such history by Dios is known. J. G. Müller, *Flavius Josephus Schrift gegen den Apion* (Basel: Bahnmeier, 1877), 131–9; A. von Gutschmid, *Kleine Schriften* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1890–93), II, 61ff. and IV, 336–589.
29. The correspondence is derived from 1 Kgs 5:13-26 and 2 Chron. 2:2-9. It appears also in Eupolemus, in a slightly revised form reflecting conditions and visions of the second

does not quote the letters in *Apion*, and his defensive tone, in regard to these in *Ap*. 1.112: 'to show that this claim about the Tyrian documents is not my concoction', and in *Ant*. 8.56: 'have said nothing more than what is true', suggest that he is aware that the authenticity of his sources is disputed. And for good reason. The testimonies of Dios and Menander,[30] in fact, say nothing about Jerusalem's temple, but speak about the construction of Tyrian temples. Neither do they speak about friendship between the kings, but only that they competed with riddles, which Hiram eventually solved at Solomon's expense.[31] Every reader of Josephus' *Against Apion* could make this observation right away, unless deceived by Josephus' rhetoric. Since Josephus' aim in *Apion* is to demonstrate the antiquity of the Jewish people, he would have fared much better by leaving the Tyrian documents as simply witnessing the existence of Solomon at an early time.

However, Josephus had greater ambitions, namely to deploy Dios and Menander in a calculation which provided evidence for the building of Jerusalem's temple at the earliest possible date set in relation to Roman history (*Ap*. 1.121–6). Composing a list of ten Tyrian kings, the first of whom is Hiram, in whose twelfth year Solomon built the temple,[32] and the last one mentioned is Pygmalion, in whose seventh year his sister fled and built 'the city of Karchedon', Josephus arrives at his 143 years and eight months by subtracting the twelve years of Hiram's reign of their combined reigns of 155 years and eight months.[33] The sister of Pygmalion, known as Elissa in Phoenician–Greek tradition (Justin, *Epitome* 8.4–6), and made famous as Dido in Virgil's *Aeneid* (Books 1 and 4), founded Carthage in 814/813 BCE, about sixty years before the founding of Rome in 752/751 BCE.[34] Josephus' Roman readers would immediately

century BCE; cf. D. Mendels, *The Land of Israel as a Political Concept in Hasmonaean Literature* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1987), 134–6.

30. Quoted from *Ant*. 8.144–9.
31. Mendels, *Identity*, 387, suggests an antithetic view to the Bible in Menander and Dios with the purpose of elevating the Tyrian king at Solomon's expense.
32. In *Ant*. 8.62, Josephus says it was built in Hiram's eleventh year, while in 1 Kgs 6:38, it was Solomon's eleventh year.
33. As we have no external evidence of Josephus' list, its authenticity is open to discussion; cf. Mendels, *The Land of Israel*, 131–43; J. Dochhorn, 'Die auf Menander von Ephesus zurückgehende Liste der Könige von Tyrus in C 1:116–26', *Internationales Josephus-Kolloquium Amsterdam 2000*, J. U. Kalms (ed.) (Münster: LIT, 2001), 77–102; *idem*, 'Die Phoenizischen Personnahmen in den bei Josephus überlieferten Quellen sur Geschichte von Tyrus. Eine textkritische und semantische Untersuchung', *WO* 35 (2005), 68–117. Josephus' 143 years seem suspicious in light of the 343 years of existence he ascribes to Onias' temple in Egypt (*War* 7.436), and the 200 years he ascribes to the Samaritan temple (*Ant*. 13.256). For Josephus' conflation of traditions about Heliopolis and Gerizim, see I. Hjelm, *The Samaritans and Early Judaism: A Literary Analysis*, JSOTS 303, CIS 7 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 229–32; *idem*, 'Cult Centralization as a Device of Cult Control', *SJOT* 13 (1999), 298–309.
34. Barclay, *Against Apion*, 76, n. 417: 'Most authors in antiquity followed Timaeus (*apud* Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant. Rom*. 1.74) in dating the foundation of Carthage to 38

recognize this and be impressed by the high antiquity of the Jewish people. In his *Jewish Antiquities* (8.62), Josephus dated the foundation of the temple in relation to the foundation of Tyre, which took place 240 years earlier. To repeat that here wouldn't make much sense, since it was Hiram's date that needed to be established. It was much wiser to remind the reader that 'the arrival of our ancestors in the land long preceded the construction of the sanctuary', as demonstrated 'on the basis of the sacred books in the *Ancient History*' (*Ap*. 1.127).

The Chaldaean/Babylonian evidence: Jerusalem's destruction and rebuilding

As his third group of ancient witnesses, Josephus brings in Chaldaean/Babylonian material (*Ap*. 1.128–60). Again, Josephus voices a single representative, Berossus, 'a Chaldaean by descent' (1.129), from whose 'third book of the *Chaldaica*' (1.142),[35] he quotes two lengthy passages about Nebuchadnezzar's conquest of Egypt and Coele-Syria and his rebuilding of Babylon with temples, palaces and hanging gardens (1.135–41), his death, chronology of succeeding kings, and the Persian takeover (1.146–53). The first passage is an exact quotation from *Ant*. 10.220–26. Of the second, only elements appear interwoven with Josephus' own account with no reference to Berossus in *Ant*. 10.229–31. In Josephus' treatment of Berossus in *Apion*, he follows a similar juridical procedure as in his treatment of the Egyptian and Phoenician evidence: introduction, quotation, calculation and conclusion. Here he also adds cross-references to 'Phoenician records' in *Ap*. 1.43–4, 155–8, which 'enable the conclusion that the

years before the first Olympiad (that is 814/13 BCE), cf. Cicero, *Resp*. 2.42. One dissenting voice was that of Pompeius Trogus (in Justin 18.6.9), who suggested 825 BCE.'

35. The work is commonly known as *Babyloniaca*. It was dedicated to Antiochus I (324–262 BCE) and probably written around 280 BCE; more precisely 278, if one reckons 'the third year of Antiochus' as referring to the period after his father Seleucus I's death in 280 BCE; cf. discussions in A. Kuhrt, 'Berossus' *Babyloniaca* and Seleucid Rule in Babylonia', *Hellenism in the East: The Interaction of Greek and Non-Greek Civilizations from Syria to Central Asia after Alexander*, A. Kuhrt & S. Sherwin-White (eds) (London: Duckworth, 1987), 32–56; G. Verbrugghe & J. Wickersham, *Berossus and Manetho, Introduced and Translated: Native Traditions in Ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1996), 13–15; Gmirkin, *Berossus and Genesis*, 240–41. Berossus lived *c*.330–250 BCE; he was a priest of Marduk-Bel in Babylon and wrote his work on Babylonian history in three books. Fragments of the work have been transmitted through Alexander Polyhistor, from which Josephus quotes; cf. P. Schnabel, *Berossus und die babylonisch-hellenistiche Litteratur* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1923), 166–8. All known fragments of Berossus have been gathered by F. Jacoby, *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker* (henceforth *FGrH*; 15 vol. Berlin, Wiedmannsche Buchhandlung, 1923–69), and recently translated by S. M. Burstein, *The Babyloniaca of Berossus* (Malibu: Undena Publication, 1978); and Verbrugghe & Wickersham, *Berossus and Manetho*.

non-Greek sources agree among themselves, and thus agree, in common, with Judean sources (1.159–60).'[36]

Josephus' introduction takes Berossus' account back to the Flood narrative and the descendants after Noah and jumps directly to *Naboukodrosoros* (Nebuchadnezzar 605–562 BCE), the destruction of Jerusalem, the exile and the advent of Cyrus (1.130–33). Josephus thereby set Jewish history within the chronological framework of *Babyloniaca*, which enumerates eighty-six kings between the Flood and the Medes' capture of Babylon, totalling 33,091 years.[37] Although the number might seem too mythical for Josephus to quote here, he nevertheless had earlier defended the high numbers of the ancients recorded 'by all historians of antiquity' (*Ant*. 1.106–7). Josephus' first quotation of Berossus contains a single reference to Jews in a list of peoples taken captive to Babylon: Judeans, Phoenicians, Syrians and peoples bordering Egypt (*Ap*. 1.137). Whether Josephus added Judeans to the list, or whether 'the peoples bordering Egypt' stands as an apposition to the former three,[38] the enlisting of Judeans links them with Phoenicia and Egypt, and diminishes their disgrace from the Babylonian conquest.

Berossus, however, does not write a single word about the conquest of Jerusalem. This might be the reason that Josephus concludes his quotation from him by stating that 'this is how he tells the story of the above-named king, with much additional material', and takes Phoenician archives and the Greek authors Philostratus[39] and Megasthenes (*c*.300 BCE) as witnesses of Berossus' reliability in regard to Nebuchadnezzar (read: Jerusalem; 1.143–4). Josephus' second quotation is introduced by a reference to the destruction of Jerusalem and its rebuilding by Cyrus, which 'will be clearly demonstrated by the statements of Berossus here presented' (1.145).

If we did not know about Josephus' tactical rhetoric, we might think that his text is corrupt, for his quotation lists the Babylonian kings succeeding Nebuchadnezzar with a few notes about each one, and it ends with Cyrus' conquest of Babylon. Not a word about Jerusalem and its temple is mentioned in the citation, but only in Josephus' concluding remarks. This time witnessed by a Phoenician list of ten kings and judges, beginning with Ithobalos,[40] during whose reign Nebuchadnezzar besieged Tyre and ending with Eiremos (Hiram),[41] during whose reign 'Cyrus the Persian seized power'. Josephus' calculation of the period adds up to about fifty years.[42] It nicely combines his first Hiram witnessing the building of Solomon's temple, with his second Hiram, reigning at the time of its reconstruction. His fifty years correlate with the second year of Cyrus'

36. Barclay, *Against Apion*, 77.
37. Jacoby, *FGrH* 680, frag. 5a; cf. Barclay, *Against Apion*, 81, n. 434.
38. Barclay, *Against Apion*, *ad loc*.
39. Unknown origin and identity.
40. Ethbaal II (591–573 BCE)
41. Hiram III (552–532 BCE).
42. The numbers and Josephus' calculation has been widely discussed, but is not a subject for this chapter.

reign (cf. Ezra 3:8). The temple's completion in Darius's second year (*Ap*. 1.154) is only a minor digression from the sixth year in Ezra 6:15, and witnesses the seventy years of its desolation (1.132; cf. *Ant*. 10.184) based on Jeremiah 25:11 and 2 Chronicles 36:21. The agreement (σύμφωνα) of the Chaldean and Tyrian materials with 'our writings on the subject of the sanctuary', Josephus claims, is 'evidence' (μαρτυρία) for his assertion of the 'antiquity of our people' (*Ap*. 1.160). This topic was alluded to in Josephus' opening statement that 'Berossus, following the most ancient records, gave an account like Moses' about the Flood and 'Noah, the founder of our race' (1.130). Josephus' closing remark rounds off his 'legal process' of the antiquity of the Jews, with which he opened his section on ancient witnesses.

The Greek evidence: reliability and reputation

Josephus' litigation, however, has not yet been brought to an end. Two cases need to be discussed: (1) arguments and slander against the reliability of Josephus' ancient history, which was largely unknown to or neglected by Greek authors (*Ap.* 1.2, 161–218); and (2) refutation of anti-Jewish slander propagated by Manetho and a few Greek authors (1.219–320), most notable of which are the Alexandrian scholars Chaeremon (1.288–303) and Apion (2.1–2.144). We will deal with the first issue here and leave the Refutation for another time. The seven Greek authors that Josephus brings as witnesses are Pythagoras, Theophrastus, Herodotus, Choerilus, Clearchus (quoting Aristotle), Hecataeus and Agatharchides, in addition to a closing appeal to yet eleven Greek authors[43] 'and perhaps many others – for I have not read every book – have made more than passing reference to us' (1.218).

The authors dealt with by Josephus date from the sixth to second century BCE and Josephus' composition basically follows their chronology, although Pythagoras (sixth century) is quoted from Hermippus (third century), and Theophrastus (fourth to third century) is placed before Herodotus. They thus fill the gap between the destruction of Jerusalem's temple and the Hasmonean period. For the remaining period until Josephus' present, he claims himself the most trustworthy expert (*Ap*. 1.47–52). Two authors have already been

43. Josephus mentions Theophilus, Theodotus, Mnaseas, Aristophanes, Hermogenes, Euhermerus, Conon and Zopyrion as examples of authors, who 'have more than passing reference to us', but 'strayed a long way from the truth about the earliest events, because they did not read our sacred books' (*Ap*. 1.216–17). He compares them with Demetrius Phaleron, The Elder Philo and Eupolemus, who being closer to the truth, nevertheless 'were unable to follow our texts with full accuracy' (1.218). This in fact leaves Josephus as the only author to have written truthfully about 'our race'. Mnaseas is quoted by Apion in *Ap*. 2.112; Demetrius Phaleron is mentioned as the chief librarian of Ptolemy's library in Alexandria, where he played a leading role in the translation of the Pentateuch; cf. *Ant*. 12.12–36 and 103–14; *Ap*. 2.46.

deployed in *Jewish Antiquities*: Herodotus[44] and Agatharchides.[45] Josephus' composition of the section in *Apion* is somewhat thematic, moving from philosophy (Pythagoras) to laws and customs (Theophrastus, Herodotus), bravery (Choerilus), wisdom, culture and reputation (Clearchus, quoting Aristotle), and with all these topics combined in Hecataeus of Abdera in addition to priesthood and temple, ending with Agatharchides' mockery of Jewish Sabbath practice.

Three witnesses – Theophrastus,[46] Herodotus[47] and Choerilus[48] – do not give direct notion of Jewish customs and bravery, but Josephus interprets their utterances about 'the oath called *korban*' (Theophrastus, 1.167), 'circumcision' (Herodotus, 1.171) as referring to Jewish customs 'deemed worthy of emulation by some people' (*Ap*. 1.166), and 'Solymian hills' (Choerilus, 1.174) as the geographical term, known as Jerusalem by his Roman audience.[49] The 'Solymian hills' was a name first used by Homer in his *Odyssey* 5.283, but after the Jewish War, it gained importance as a synonym for Jerusalem, and Josephus definitely played his part in this development (*Ant*. 7.68). He might have derived it from Eupolemus' 'Hierosolyma' (*Praep. Ev.* 9.34.11).[50] Choerilus' poem about Xerxes' campaign against Greece in 480 BCE, which 'after listing all the nations, at the end he included ours as well' (1.172), might have been chosen by Josephus, because it conveniently exhibits Jewish superiority ('a people, remarkable to see'), fits his portrait of Jewish allegiance with the Persians given in his *Jewish Antiquities*,[51] contains a reference to the Solymian hills, and, finally, he might have sensed that it supported his use of Herodotus.

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44. *Ant*. 8.157, 253–62 (Shishak's campaign against Palestine–Syria and circumcision); 10.18–20 (Sennacherib's campaign against Egypt).
45. *Ant*. 12.5–7.
46. Theophrastus (372–288/7 BCE) was a pupil and successor of Aristotle. He was the author of a work on comparative constitutional law in 24 books, *On Laws*. An explicit reference to Judeans can be found in his work *De Pietate* (*On Piety*) transmitted through Porphyry, *Abst*. 2.26, where he depicts Judeans as philosophers and belonging to the Syrian people; cf. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors,* I, 10. Josephus might not have known this, since he chose the inexact reference about the *korban*.
47. Herodotus the Halicarnassian (*c*.484–425 BCE) was an ethnographer and history writer on contemporary history, which he learned from visiting and living in most of the Mediterranean world. His main work, *Historiae*, centres on Persia's wars with Greece from the perspective of Barbarians versus Greeks. Josephus quotes from Herodotus, *Hist*. 2.104.
48. Choerilus of Samos was a contemporary of Herodotus. He flourished in the fifth century BCE as the author of a poetic account in epic verse of Persia's invasion of Greece.
49. Among Roman authors (e.g. Flaccus, *Argon*. 1.13; Martial 7.55.7; 11.94; Statius, *Silv*. 5.2.138; Pausanias, *Descr*. 8.16.4–5), who used the term for Jerusalem, we also find Tacitus (*Hist*. 5.2.3), who likewise make a connection to Homer's Solymian hills in his establishment of a theory of Jewish origin; Barclay, *Against Apion*, 102, n. 574; cf. Gutschmid, *Kleine Schriften* IV, 572; H. Lévy, 'Tacite et l'origine du peuple juif', *Latomus* 5 (1946), 331–40.
50. I. Hjelm, *Jerusalem's Rise to Sovereignty: Zion and Gerizim in Competition*, JSOTSup, 404/CIS, 14 (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 262.
51. Hjelm, *Samaritans and Early Judaism*, 202–4.

That Choerilus' poem draws heavily on Herodotus' catalogue of nations (7.59–100), where the most savage part of Josephus' citation refers to Asiatic 'Ethiopians' (7.70), goes unnoticed by him.[52] He seemingly accepts the disdainful grouping of his people with Herodotus' barbarians for the sake of being mentioned by Greek authors. Even to the extent that Choerilus' description of hair dress as 'round-shaven' (*troxokourades*) is derived from Herodotus' description of Arabs (3.8), and conflicts with Levitical rules (19:27; cf. Jer. 9:26).[53] It is perhaps not such a wonder that Josephus digs up this rather unknown poem and ignores 'every detail except the geographical reference',[54] rather than making a more substantial use of Herodotus as he had done in *Jewish Antiquities*. Josephus might have aimed at stressing the antiquity of the custom of circumcision by drawing on a text, which in Herodotus 2.102ff. is combined with Pharaoh Sesostris' campaign against Palestine-Syria, but might have referred to several other peoples, who also practised circumcision.[55] In *Ant*. 8.253, Josephus corrects Herodotus and claims that the name should be *Isookos* (Shishak), and interweaves Herodotus' text with his own interpretation of Shishak's campaign in 1 Kings 14 and 2 Chronicles 12 (*Ant*. 8.253–62). The focal point in Josephus' use of Herodotus in *Apion* is an identification of 'the Syrians in Palestine', who mentioned together with the 'Phoenicians' as those who had learned circumcision from the Egyptians, create the link to Choerilus' 'Phoenician speech' in 'referring to us' (*Ap*. 1.174).[56]

Of the Greek authors, who explicitly mention Jews, Josephus cites Pythagoras' instructions in his imitation and adoption of 'the belief of Judeans and Tracians' (*Ap*. 1.162–5).[57] The citation drawn from Hermippus' first book *On Pythagoras* might have been intended to denigrate rather than flatter the famous philosopher, but Josephus highly praises both of them for their wisdom and accuracy. Rather than mentioning Plato, who he in *Ap*. 2.168 and 257 declares had learned

52. Barclay, *Against Apion*, 102, n. 573: 'Since the "Solymian hills" are mentioned by Homer in proximity to a reference to Ethiopia, and since his last line echoes the Herodotean depiction of Ethiopians, most commentators conclude that Choerilus' literary invention would evoke for his first hearers an "Ethiopian" people. In this case the lake could refer to the Red Sea or even the Persian Gulf'; cf. Herodotus 7.89; Gutschmid, *Kleine Schriften*, IV, 575–7; G. Huxley, 'Choirilus of Samos', *GRBS* 10 (1969), 12–29 (18–20).
53. A. Momigliano, *Alien Wisdom: The Limits of Hellenization* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 77; cf. Barclay, *Against Apion*, *ad loc.*
54. Barclay, *Against Apion*, 102, n. 573.
55. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors*, I, 3–4.
56. It was a general Roman perception that circumcision was not a 'Syrian' but a distinctly Jewish custom (e.g. Petronius, *Sat*. 104.14; Tacitus, *Hist*. 5.5.2; Suetonius, *Dom*. 12.2); cf. Barclay, *Against Apion*, 100, n. 563.
57. Pythagoras of Samos (*c*.570–480 BCE) is basically known through fourth- and third-century biographies by Diogenes Laertus, Porphyry of Tyre, Iamblichus of Chalcis and Hermippus of Smyrna (late third century BCE). It is basically agreed that either Josephus or Hermippus added Jews to Pythagoras' list of philosophers; cf. B. Bar-Kochva, *The Image of Jews in Greek Literature: The Hellenistic Period* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2010), 166–7.

philosophy and the laws from Moses, Josephus takes his chronology back to the earliest period of Greek philosophy and historiography by listing Pythagoras, Anaxagoras,[58] Plato[59] and Stoic philosophers as emulating Moses' 'original expression' (2.168; 281). A similar method is used in Josephus' discussion of Moses' role as legislator exceeding 'in antiquity the legislators referred to anywhere else. The Lycurguses, and Solons, and Zaleukos, the legislator of the Locrians, and all those admired by the Greeks, seem to have been but yesterday or the day before compared to him' (*Ap*. 2.154). Josephus evidences this by noting that the term 'law' was not known among Greeks of old or used by Homer (2.155).

Chronology and fame play a role in Josephus' list of witnesses, and it would not have been complete if Aristotle had been missing. His words are voiced by 'Clearchus, a pupil of Aristotle and second to none among the peripatetic philosophers' in his first book, *On Sleep*. Josephus claims the words to be authentically Aristotelian and mentions him no less than four times in his commentary, and once in the quotation. The citation has the form of a dialogue, in which Aristotle relates his meeting with the learned Jew, whom he characterizes as descending from Indian philosophers. In India, they are called Calanoi and in Coele-Syria, Judeans, taking their name from the place name of their habitation, Judea. Declaring the name of their city to be 'extremely contorted', Clearchus' mocking pronunciation is *Hierousaleme*, rather than the usual Greek form *Hierosolyma*. As a man who 'was in the habit of coming down from the highlands to the coast', the Jew had become Greek in spirit and soul, and visiting places (of wisdom) and 'been in the company of many educated people', he even conveyed 'some of what he had' (*Ap*. 1.177–81). Josephus continues his commentary by mentioning that Aristotle further relates in detail 'the immense and extraordinary endurance of the Judean man in his mode of life and his moderation',[60] and admonishes his readers to consult 'the book itself' (1.182). Clearchus text is intent on creating a contrast between the educated Greeks and the Jew, who had only achieved true wisdom by visiting the Greeks. Josephus might not have disagreed, however much he elevates Mosaic wisdom in his treatise, and the passage might have seemed fitting as an implied self-portrait.

Josephus voices, by reference to Hecataeus of Abdera, a second example of a wise and admired Jew. Josephus characterizes Hecataeus as 'a philosopher and extremely able in practical affairs'. He flourished in the time of Alexander, was 'associated with Ptolemy son of Lagos' and composed 'a book on the Judeans themselves' (*Ap*. 1.183). The book Josephus uses, however, might have been an expansionist rewriting, composed by an unknown Jewish author (pseudo-Hecataeus) from the late second century BCE, on the basis of Hecataeus' excursus on Judeans in his ethnographic work about the Egyptians from around 300

58. *c*.500–428 BCE.

59. *c*.428–348 BCE.

60. Josephus lists endurance (καρτερία), moderation (σωφροσύνη), justice (δικαιοσύνη) and social harmony (συμφωνια) as the four cardinal virtues in Mosaic philosophy (2.170).

BCE.[61] Josephus had formerly referred to Hecataeus in a list of Greek historians (*Ant*. 1.108), a composer of a book on Abraham (*Ant*. 1.159), and as a witness of the sacredness of the Jewish Law in a letter from Demetrius Phaleron to Ptolemy II Philadelphus, in recommendation of the translation of the Law (*Ant*. 12.38; cf. *Let. Arist.* 31). It is this last reference that Josephus expands on in *Apion* 1.183–205, with quotations, preceded by a lengthy introduction. The section is introduced by dates and events, which gives Josephus an opportunity to state that 'it is clear that our nation was flourishing at the time of both Ptolemy and Alexander' (1.185). Conflicting with *Arist*. 13 and *Ant*. 12.7, but in agreement with *Ant*. 12.9, he states that the people went with Ptolemy to Egypt of their own free will, rather than being deported. By introducing Ezekias, 'a high priest of the Judeans' (cf. *Arist*. 9), Josephus' allusion to the translation of the Law ('the complete difference';[62] 1.189; cf. *Arist*. 128–71) has Hecataeus praise Ezekias for his philosophical and political virtues, whereafter he arrives at his focal point: Hecataeus' admiration of Jewish steadfastness in regard to law-observance (*Ap*. 1.191–3). This point Josephus elaborates at length in his discussion of Agartharcides' critique of Sabbath observance (1.206–12), and in his defence of obedience of the Law as 'a proof of virtue' (2.219–35). Hecataeus' text in Diodorus Siculus, in fact, says the opposite, namely that 'many of their traditional practices were changed' under Persian and Macedonian rule (*Diod.* 40.3.8).

After Josephus' exposition of Hecataeus' views on the high priest and the Law, he continues his descriptions of: the people, 'how populous our nation has become'; the land, 'the size' and 'its beauty', 'the most fertile land'; and the city, 'very beautiful and very large', 'its abundance of men' and the 'design of the temple' (*Ap*. 1.194–6). He ends this section with a quotation from Hecataeus that describes the city with its 120,000 inhabitants, the temple and the priests (1.197–9). Josephus' elaborate description in *Apion* has no parallel in Hecataeus' account, which states that 'he [Moses] founded, besides other cities, one that is the most renowned of all, called Jerusalem. In addition he established the temple that they hold in chief veneration, instituted their forms of worship and ritual' (*Diod.* 40.3.3). Hecataeus further mentions that 'he had no images whatsoever

61. Hecataeus has been transmitted through Diodorus Siculus (first century BCE), and scholars usually agree on the genuineness of the texts found in vol. 1 of his *Bibliotheca Historica*, but have reservations regarding 'the Jewish chapter' in vol. 40; cf. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors*, vol. I, 20: 'It is noteworthy that there is a conspicuous difference between the "Jewish chapter" in the fortieth book of Diodorus, where the Jews appear as foreigners expelled from Egypt, and the first book of Diodorus, where a voluntary emigration of Jews, who were originally Egyptians, is implied, Cf. also Jacoby, *FGrH* IIIa, 50. The citations of Hecataeus in Josephus, *Ap.* 1.183–204, are accepted with great reservation, because of Josephus' ideological description rather than the neutral description in Diodorus; see Stern, 'The Jews', 1101–59; for a lengthy analysis, see Gmirkin, *Berossus*, ch. 3.

62. The text, however, is uncertain; cf. Barclay, *Against Apion*, *ad loc.*

of the gods made for them' (40.3.4), but he says nothing about votive offering or sacred groves mentioned by Josephus (*Ap*. 1.199).

Now Josephus only needs bravery and wisdom to complete his biblical picture (priest/prophet, law, obedience, nation/people, land, city and temple) of 'our nation'. For this purpose, he continues with Hecataeus'[63] narrative about a Judean man, called Mosollamos, in service of Alexander's army. He is described as 'a person of considerable intellectual strength' and 'the best archer of all, both Greeks and barbarians'. Mosollamos gets a chance to demonstrate his capabilities, when a diviner halts the army for taking omens from a bird, whether to continue or to stop. Mosollamos immediately shoots the bird, and facing anger and curse, he replies: 'How could this thing give us any sound information about our journey, when it could not even foresee its own safety?' In further ridicule of their superstition, Mosollamos continues: 'For if it had been able to know the future, it would not have come to this spot for fear that it be shot and killed by Mosollamos, the Judean' (*Ap*. 1.201–4).

The combination of intellectual and physical capability was used also in Josephus' description of Hecataeus and Ezekias, and it implicitly contradicts the docility of the Jews described in Hecataeus' account.[64] Josephus thus uses Hecataeus' account to counter Agatharchides'[65] harsh critique of Jewish stupidity (*ἄνοια*; 1.210), as the Jews did not take up arms on the Sabbath day, with the result that the city became conquered by Ptolemy son of Lagus (*Ap.*1.209–11, with a shorter version in *Ant*. 12.5–7). Josephus implicitly denies Agarthachides' moral conclusion that 'the event has taught everyone, except them, against running away to dreams and traditional fancy about the law, on occasions when they are impotent in human reasoning concerning matters in which they are at a loss' (*Ap*. 1.211). This critique of Sabbath observance had become a current theme, and a sort of stock motif in non-Jewish literature also in the Roman era. Derived from stories about Seleucid attacks on Jerusalem in Jewish sources, especially in the Books of the Maccabees,[66] not only Ptolemy Soter, but also Pompey,[67]

63. According to Barclay, *Against Apion*, *ad loc*, the narrative seems to be a direct quotation from Ps.-Hecataeus.
64. Diod. 40.3.6.
65. Agatharchides of Cnidus (second century BCE) was a historian and ethnographer who flourished in Alexandria in the first half of the second century BCE. His critique of the Ptolemaic regime caused him to flee the city in 145 BCE. Josephus voices this critique in *Ap.* 1.210 and *Ant*. 12.6 ('a cruel master'), conflicting with his praise of the king's 'kindness and benevolence' in *Ap*. 1.186, as mentioned above.
66. Antiochus IV, in 2 Macc. 5:25. For a discussion of Sabbath and war, see Nodet, *Origins of Judaism*, 63–92. For Roman opinions and critique of the Sabbath, see Gruen, *Diaspora*, 48–50.
67. Strabo, *Geogr*. 16.2.40; Dio 37.16.2–4; Appian, *Hist. Rom*. 11.50, suggests that Ptolemy's capture of the city on the Sabbath day was known as a precedent to that of Pompey; cf. Barclay, *Against Apion*, 120, n. 713.

Sosius[68] and Vespasian[69] are said to have besieged the city on the Sabbath day by taking advantage of the Jewish population's idleness and lack of defence.

In spite of the story's intent on ridiculing (*Ap.* 1.205, 212) Jewish practice, which Josephus could have neglected, he might have seen it fitting as an example of the high antiquity of Sabbath observance.[70] In *Ant*. 12.3–4, he, in fact, obviated Agatharchides' account, by claiming that Ptolemy, contrary to his surname Soter (meaning saviour), 'seized Jerusalem by resorting to cunning and deceit'; however, he admitted that the attack did happen on the Sabbath day and caught the people by surprise.

Conclusion

In Josephus' use of sources in *Apion* 1.1–218, he set up a case between authors who write true history on the basis of ancient records, and those who are limited to either contemporary or unreliable writings, because they lack such sources. This dichotomy he set between Eastern historiographers of Egyptian, Phoenician, Chaldean, Babylonian (and Jewish) origin and their Greek contemporaries. Because of climatic and political disturbances, and their ancestors' late knowledge of the alphabet and art of writing, the Greeks did not have records at their disposal. Although Eastern histories are written by authors who are contemporary or later (Manetho, Berossus, Dios and Menander) than most of Josephus' Greek witnesses, he nevertheless considers them trustworthy witnesses to his own history, because of their accuracy, precision and claimed harmony with his own tradition. Josephus refers to about fifty Greek authors in *Apion*[71] and, apart from the few treated in this chapter, he declares them superior in eloquence and cleverness, but lacking in reliability. His comparison aims at establishing the highest antiquity of the Jews, their literary traditions, law and customs, and places 'our race' among those held in the highest esteem in the Roman Empire. He furthermore seeks to counter arguments and slander against the reliability of his *Jewish Antiquities*, by demonstrating a continual and widespread reputation of the Jewish people, however much they have been neglected by Greek authors. Most of his witnesses, however, do not speak about Jews at all, or in a negative way only; but allusions and bad press serve his case better than neglect.

68. Dio 49.22.4–5.
69. Frontinus, *Str*. 2.1.17; cf. Dio 66.7.2.
70. Nodet, *Origins of Judaism*, 66–9, argues that Josephus edited his quotation of Agatharchides to fit his purpose of demonstrating the antiquity of this Sabbath observance, which was probably not established before the Hasmonean period.
71. Kasher, 'Polemic and Apologetic', 159.

13

Recognition scenes in the *Odyssey* and the gospels

John Taylor

In reading and teaching Greek and Latin literature, I am often struck by biblical parallels, but also by how little attention they have received in modern times. Acknowledgment of affinity was once usual: this is immediately apparent in the history of art, and in Milton, where stories from classical and biblical sources are constantly compared or conflated. There are welcome signs that this affinity is being rediscovered.[1] The time spans of the two bodies of writing are broadly similar, beginning in perhaps the eighth century BCE (though incorporating earlier material), and extending for about a thousand years. Both are products of a Mediterranean world influenced by older cultures of the Near East. Resemblance between stories can sometimes be explained by direct debt or by a common source, but my concern is with analogy rather than genealogy.

The Trojan War has a role in classical literature comparable to the Exodus in the Bible, as an endlessly rich source of reference and allusion. Authors in both traditions are concerned with a heroic past and its bearing on the present, and they rewrite earlier texts because they see earlier events re-enacted. On this broad timescale, the Homeric epics are naturally compared with Genesis (or with the Pentateuch as a whole), as foundational texts in their respective traditions. Virgil's *Aeneid* in turn occupies a position roughly analogous to that of the New Testament, as an ambitious and radical reworking of the tradition close to the turn of the era.[2] But there is much to be gained, too, by juxtaposing Homer and the gospels. The *Iliad* and *Odyssey* share with them the theme of suffering hero, who is in some sense unrecognized and without honour. The poet Peter Levi found in Homer and the gospels a freshness unequalled elsewhere in ancient literature. Adult learners of Greek most frequently cite,

1. As witness the present volume, as well as (for example) Loveday Alexander, *Acts in its Ancient Literary Context* (London: T&T Clark, 2005); M. P. Bonz, *The Past as Legacy: Luke-Acts and Ancient Epic* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2000), Bruce Louden, *Homer's* Odyssey *and the Near East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).
2. I sketched some ideas along these lines in John Taylor, *Classics and the Bible: Hospitality and Recognition* (London: Duckworth, 2007).

as their motivation, the desire to read Homer or the gospels in their original language.

Styles of interpretation have often been similar. Both for Homer and for the gospels, we depend still on traditional analytical scholarship, but the focus now is typically on whole texts, and what happens in front of them (reader response, reception history). In both cases, there has been a reaction against doctrinaire theories of oral composition (which had denied that these texts could be read like other books), and a new interest in narrative methods. On narrower topics, too, there are remarkable parallels. The *Iliad* and *Odyssey* seem to have differed from the other poems in the (now largely lost) Epic Cycle much as the canonical gospels differ from the apocryphal ones, in a more restrained – and therefore more effective – handling of the supernatural. The pendulum of interpretation both of the extended similes in Homer and of the parables of Jesus has swung between the quest for detailed allegory and insistence on a single point of comparison; in both, we now see a traditional sub-genre raised to new heights by a master hand. The *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were probably composed in the later part of the eighth century BCE, and rapidly attained a cultural centrality that they never lost. All four gospels are now usually dated to the last third of the first century CE. These two pre-eminently influential sets of texts frame Greek literature, coming respectively several centuries before and several centuries after most of the other central works of the literary canon. Yet, paradoxically, the New Testament is often excluded completely from that canon – or at best has an ambiguous status, whereby it both is and is not part of Greek literature. But here again, there are welcome signs of change: there is much interest now in Greek literature of the Roman imperial period, in particular in the Greek novel (a genre which has significant similarities to the New Testament texts),[3] and in sources that show us the Roman Empire from external and potentially subversive viewpoints.

By the time the New Testament was written, familiarity with Homer was taken for granted by authors and readers in the Greco-Roman world. The authors of the gospels, epistles and Revelation vary in the sophistication of their Greek, and in their likely degree of familiarity with pagan texts: Luke evidently has more classical learning than most, and he and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews are the most self-conscious prose stylists. Dennis MacDonald, in *The Homeric Epics and the Gospel of Mark*,[4] controversially argues for the direct and pervasive influence of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, even on the gospel commonly regarded as the least polished of the four (notwithstanding its author's natural talent as a storyteller). Many readers may, however, conclude that, while the claimed echoes in phrasing are no more than coincidence (often involving very common words), the thematic similarities and shared story-patterns to which MacDonald interestingly draws attention (and which characterize all the gospels) are the more remarkable for occurring independently.

3. See, for example, Alexander, *Acts in its Ancient Literary Context*, 69–95, 133–63.
4. Dennis R. MacDonald, *The Homeric Epics and the Gospel of Mark* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000).

A particularly striking example is the theme of recognition (in Greek *anagnôrisis*).[5] Aristotle, in the *Poetics* (1459b), comments that the *Odyssey* uses *anagnôrisis* throughout, unifying its complex plot. The Byzantine commentator Eustathius applied to the recognition scenes in the epic the formulaic adjective *polutropos* ('of many turns') which the poet uses of Odysseus himself: they share his many-sided cleverness and versatility. The recognition scenes in the gospels are similarly various. In both cases their frequency allows formal analysis of a recurrent 'type scene', whose elements can be combined in various ways.[6] *Anagnôrisis* is pervasive in the *Odyssey* and in the gospels alike, because the texts share basic themes, story-patterns and literary strategies: disguise and secrecy, a central character whose identity is unknown to those around him, and a sustained use of dramatic irony dependent on the reader's fuller knowledge.

Both Homeric epics are stories of absence and return: Odysseus to Ithaca, Achilles to the battlefield. The *Odyssey* is already a variant of a more obvious narrative: the experiences of Odysseus seem those of a hero seeking a wife and a home, yet we know that Penelope and Ithaca represent his true destination, explicitly preferred to more glittering alternatives. Returning home in disguise, Odysseus wins again the woman to whom he is married already. He regains what he lost at the beginning of the larger story that the epic assumes: this is a boomerang quest. The Bible often uses a similar narrative pattern. The Promised Land is the place where Abraham had precariously established a foothold, long before. The accounts of Jacob and of Job, the history of the Babylonian Exile, the parable of the Prodigal Son: all these are stories of absence and return, of loss and restoration. Above all this is the shape of the grand structure created by combining the Hebrew scriptures and the New Testament ('from the first days of our disobedience unto the glorious Redemption').[7] Jesus, in the gospels, has not indeed trodden the earth before, but the anticipation of his return in glory provides a context for the highly Odyssean admonition 'you do not know when the master of the house will come' (Mark 13:35).

Both in the *Odyssey* and in the gospels, recognition often occurs in the context of hospitality.[8] While Odysseus is away from Ithaca, many proprieties lapse, but hospitality remains the decisive social litmus. It provides the context for the first recognition scene, where Telemachus welcomes the goddess Athene disguised as his father's friend, Mentes. The suitors, unwelcome guests in the palace, are meanwhile preoccupied with feasting. Yet even they, when later confronted with the beggar who is the returned Odysseus, acknowledge that a

5. N. J. Richardson, 'Recognition Scenes in the Odyssey and Ancient Literary Criticism', *Papers of the Liverpool Latin Seminar* vol. 4 (1983), 219–35; S. Murnaghan, *Disguise and Recognition in the* Odyssey (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987); T. Cave, *Recognitions: A Study in Poetics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988).
6. P. Gainsford, 'Formal Analysis of Recognition Scenes in the Odyssey', *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 123 (2003), 41–59; K. B. Larsen, *Recognizing the Stranger: Recognition Scenes in the Gospel of John* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 55–72.
7. Eric Milner-White, Christmas bidding prayer.
8. Murnaghan, *Disguise and Recognition*, 91–117; Taylor, *Classics and the Bible*.

visitor may be a god in disguise. Their aggressive leader Antinous is reproached by a companion for throwing a stool at the unrecognized hero:

> You are a doomed man if he turns out to be some god from heaven. And the gods do disguise themselves as strangers from afar, and move from city to city in every shape, observing the violence and the justice of men. (17.484–7)

That belief constantly colours Homeric hospitality. We meet here the widespread folktale theme (attested in many traditions)[9] of a divine or royal visitor, testing people by coming among them in disguise to see how he will be treated when self-interested deference is stripped away.

Religion and hospitality are constantly linked. Odysseus when newly arrived in an unfamiliar place speculates whether the inhabitants are 'wild, savage and unjust' or 'hospitable to strangers and of god-fearing mind' (e.g. 6.120–21). In a world with no legal system, hotels or consulates, newly arrived strangers are vulnerable, and so come under the special protection of Zeus. Every visitor has a claim on those to whom he comes, but the heightened vulnerability of a suppliant or beggar puts him particularly in need of divine protection, and makes inappropriate treatment correspondingly culpable. The Phaeacian princess Nausicaa knows that 'all strangers and beggars are from Zeus' (6.207–8), and is sensitive to the possibility that the brine-encrusted figure before her may be himself a god. Zeus, perhaps in origin a god of the sky and weather, is already, in the *Odyssey*, envisaged as the guardian of morality. Later poets and thinkers will make of him a quasi-monotheist universal deity. It is plausible to see in this development a steady broadening of his role as the god of host and guest, and protector of the weak. Greek religion imposed virtually no absolute divine commands, but the law of hospitality to strangers was universally observed and can properly be called a sacrament.

Athene tells Telemachus that his father still lives, and that the time has come to go in search of him. She leaves 'flying upward like a bird' (1.320). Whether metamorphosis or simile, this is enough to make Telemachus aware that he has been entertaining a god: their meeting has been informal, yet with a numinous quality. A scene that describes the entertaining of a god is now usually referred to as a theoxeny. This modern critical term was used in classical Greece for a religious ritual that enacted such entertainment (broadly comparable to the Roman *lectisternium*, where couches were prepared for the gods as banqueters, or to the later custom of laying an extra place at table for the returning Christ). In the *Odyssey* and in later Greek literature, recognitions of people (and internalized recognitions, moments of self-knowledge and of insight into the workings of the world) are modelled on scenes where a god is recognized, and they retain something of the atmosphere of those encounters. Emily Kearns, in an important essay, shows how the reception of the disguised Odysseus in Ithaca belongs within this conceptual framework.[10] As in the underlying folktale, the unknown

9. Larsen, *Recognizing the Stranger*, 25.
10. E. Kearns, 'The Return of Odysseus: A Homeric Theoxeny', *Classical Quarterly* 32(1) (1982), 1–8.

but important guest may be a heroic or royal but still human figure. Scenes of hospitality and recognition in human contexts draw repeatedly on a basic story pattern where the guest is a god. The moral worth of other characters is tested by their response to the beggar: accepting or rejecting this humble visitor is tantamount to accepting or rejecting Odysseus himself.

Biblical parallels for all this extend from Abraham and the three heavenly visitors at Mamre in Genesis 18 to the story of the sheep and goats in Matthew 25, a great word-picture of the Last Judgment: 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.' The setting of Matthew's theoxeny is strongly supernatural, but its content is radically demythologized. Beginning in the language of apocalyptic, the ancient story of a divine visitor who comes in disguise is restated as an account of response to the depth of human need in others. In Matthew, as in the *Odyssey*, moral worth is tested by response to a humble stranger, subsequently revealed as ruler and judge. The Prayer Book Collect for Advent takes up the same ideas, with its contrast between 'the time of this mortal life, in which thy son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility' and 'the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty, to judge both the quick and the dead'. Matthew's story is about recognition, or, rather, initial non-recognition (for charity was offered disinterestedly by the virtuous), followed by perception of the unsuspected truth.

Many of the adventures of Odysseus are narrated by the hero himself when he is being entertained by the Phaeacians (initially unaware of his identity). When the blind court bard, Demodocus, sings about the Trojan War, Odysseus is told stories about himself. Twice he weeps as he relives the experience described, prompting his host Alcinous to ask him to disclose who he is. The stranger is revealed as the subject of the heroic song just heard, illustrating what Terence Cave shows is the recurrent association of recognition with retrospective narrative.[11] This reorientation of roles has an uncanny quality. The self-revelation of Odysseus resembles a divine epiphany. The episode attests the power of poetry: it is an ambitious metaphor for literary experience. The Phaeacians are entertained by a story which, to Odysseus, is painfully moving, and their response mirrors that of the reader to the epic itself: we are moved by stories about people whose experiences are like our own, and we recognize ourselves within them. His self-disclosing 'I am' has a parallel in the words of Jesus to the high priest (Mark 14:62).[12] The identification of a person present with a character in a narrative just heard has a parallel in Luke's account of Jesus in the synagogue at Nazareth: after reading from Isaiah about the one sent to preach good news to the poor, freedom for prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, he ends 'Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing' (Luke 4:16-21, quoting Isa. 61:1-2). We shall see below that this theme is central to the story of the supper at Emmaus.

When Odysseus takes over as narrator, an early and programmatic adventure is the encounter with the Lotus-eaters, who dangerously, although without

11. Cave, *Recognitions*, 22.
12. MacDonald, *The Homeric Epics and the Gospel of Mark*, 52.

malice, offer a fabulous food that brings forgetfulness and makes the recipient want to stay with them indefinitely (*Od*. 9.83–104). Throughout the *Odyssey*, inappropriate eating is linked to loss of homecoming, and forgetfulness of the past is forgetfulness also of the destination. Reading the *Odyssey* as a *Pilgrim's Progress* (its hero a representative man on a spiritual journey, with Ithaca standing for eternity) can be traced to the Hellenistic philosopher Antiochus of Ascalon, and became commonplace in later antiquity, especially in its Neoplatonist form. It surely responds to something in the text itself, and provides an important part of the background against which the biblical parallels are so compelling: again the Prayer Book comes to mind ('that we may so pass through things temporal that we finally lose not the things eternal').

Next and most famous among the narrated adventures is the encounter with the Cyclops Polyphemus, a monster who eats six of the companions of Odysseus, before the rest contrive their escape. Homeric hospitality is a triangle: host, guest and food. When it works, benevolent hosts ply welcome guests with wholesome food. When it goes wrong, each element turns into a dark obverse (the guest becomes a prisoner), or the triangle disturbingly rotates and roles become confused. In Ithaca, the suitors behave like bad hosts when they are, in fact, intrusive and uninvited guests. The returned and disguised Odysseus is ill-treated as an unwelcome guest, although he is the true host. Hospitality is most drastically perverted when guests become food. Polyphemus, at the end of his episode, experiences a moment of recognition: like the Phaeacians, he links the man in front of him to someone he has heard about, in an old prophecy that Odysseus would one day come and rob him of his sight (9.507–12). Similarly, in the next book, the enchantress Circe immediately realizes it is Odysseus she is entertaining when, forearmed with an antidote from Hermes, he proves impervious to her potion (10.330–32). The Sirens, too, know at once who Odysseus is (12.184). Enemies and unexpected people quickly recognize the hero when others do not. This theme has a striking parallel in Mark's gospel. Demons and evil spirits habitually recognize Jesus, while his own companions remain unaware of his true identity. The possessed man in the synagogue at Capernaum cries out, 'I know who you are, the Holy One of God' (Mark 1:24). When Jesus carried out healings, he 'would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him' (1:34). The man called Legion (because of the multitude of spirits tormenting him) asks: 'What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God?' (5:7). More positively, the centurion who witnesses the crucifixion exclaims, unprompted, 'Truly this man was the Son of God' (Mark 15:39). Mark's distinctive idea of the 'Messianic secret' (expressing the real but deliberately hidden nature of Jesus) uses dramatic irony about the identity of the central character, in a way which is curiously reminiscent of the *Odyssey*.[13]

The surviving companions of Odysseus eventually fall prey to their own folly, killing and eating the Cattle of the Sun in the absence of their leader, and in direct contravention of his warning. The characterization of a hero through

13. MacDonald, *The Homeric Epics and the Gospel of Mark*, 44–7, Taylor, *Classics and the Bible*, 13.

followers who persistently misunderstand him has a parallel in Mark's presentation of the disciples. They, in turn, evoke the Israelites in the Exodus story, with Jesus implicitly cast as Moses. Disobedience in the leader's absence echoes the making and veneration of the Golden Calf (Exod. 32:1-20). Inappropriate eating is to the *Odyssey* what inappropriate religion is to the Bible. When Odysseus is delivered asleep to Ithaca by his Phaeacian escorts, he wakes up alone and disorientated: this first recognition is to be not of a person, but of a place. As often in Homer, this is explained on two levels: he had been long absent, and Athene poured a thick mist around him. Odysseus has lost, during his travels, the identity conferred and represented by Ithaca. Its own identity is revealed to him by the goddess, disguised as a shepherd boy. His prompted recognition of the land stands at the head of a great climactic sequence of prompted and unprompted recognitions of Odysseus himself, culminating in his reunion with Penelope and with his aged father Laertes.

Athene now sends him, his appearance transformed to that of an old beggar, to visit the loyal swineherd Eumaeus, who entertains his master unawares. The swineherd reluctantly supplies the table of the prodigal suitors, but his own farmstead is a model of modest good order (14.3–20). Like Nausicaa, Eumaeus knows that *xenoi* and beggars are from Zeus. In the extended sequence of scenes in his hut, we have the first statement of major literary themes: the paradox of the courtly, that the best manners are learned in simple life, and the idea of a pastoral setting for an epiphany (coloured in later tradition by the story of the shepherds in Luke 2, as well as by Ps. 23). We have seen that recognition or revelation of the hero is, in the *Odyssey*, repeatedly reminiscent of a theoxeny. This association of ideas becomes more explicit when Odysseus reveals himself to his son. Telemachus, on returning from his travels in quest of his father, likewise goes first to the swineherd's hut. While the host is temporarily absent, Athene arranges the restoration of Odysseus to his normal appearance. Telemachus, seeing him uncannily transfigured, exclaims that he is surely a god. In a fine example of wordplay, Homer has Odysseus reply: 'I am not a god (*theos*) … but I am your (*teos*) father' (16.187–8). The human is here shown as paradoxically more miraculous than the divine.

From the hut of Eumaeus, Odysseus goes to try his luck as a beggar, and to see how things stand, in his own palace. Recognitions here steadily increase in tension, involving people of progressively greater closeness. But before any human character comes the dog Argus (17.291–327). Reared by Odysseus before he went to Troy, he now lies neglected on a dung-heap. Recognizing his master, he wags his tale and drops his ears but is unable to move. Odysseus in turn cannot show the dog overt affection, but diverts Eumaeus with conversation as he wipes away a tear. So Argus dies, having seen the long-awaited Odysseus. If small things can be compared to great, this passage has a parallel in the story of Simeon, who had been told he would not die before seeing the promised Messiah: 'Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace' (Luke 2:29).

The rejected beggar, who had suffered insult and violence at the hands of the suitors, has been revealed as the rightful owner of the palace. The type of theoxeny story where the disguised visitor comes specifically as the rightful

owner to his own domain is, of course, also biblical. It receives grand statement in the prologue of John's gospel, expounding the significance of the Incarnation:

> He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. (John 1:10-11)

In mediating the hospitality of God (a sort of reverse theoxeny, again picking up a theme from Ps. 23), Jesus meets with inhospitality and rejection, from the time of his birth, when there is no room in the inn (Luke 2:7), to his sufferings and death. Especially in Luke's version, it is constantly the humble and those outside society who recognize and welcome Jesus, and are brought by him from the margins to a central and honoured place.

The gospel story after the Resurrection once again uses the Homeric theme of absence and return. The four evangelists handle this part of the narrative in revealingly different ways. John has a sequence of appearances and recognitions of Jesus: to Mary Magdalene, to the disciples met behind locked doors, to Thomas, and (in a final chapter perhaps added by another hand) to Peter and others back at their old occupation of fishing in Galilee. The first of these intersecting episodes about the passage from ignorance to understanding is a dramatic masterpiece (John 20:1-18). Mary arrives in darkness to find the stone removed. She runs to fetch Peter and the beloved disciple: they find the tomb empty, the grave-clothes folded. The beloved disciple sees and believes, yet still the two go home. Why is Mary abandoned? Perhaps they leave her alone with her grief. But the answer may rather be that it creates a more effective setting for the recognition which follows, for in this encounter of a woman and a man in a garden we are surely once more in Eden. As in his prologue ('In the beginning …'), John revisits Genesis, and shows the end as the beginning restored. As in the *Odyssey*, that restoration is symbolized by a woman recognizing a man returned. Mary sees Jesus standing before her: as yet, she does not know him, but takes him for the gardener, and asks if he has removed the body. And now (whether through the naturalistic tokens of voice and gesture, or by other means), the recognition takes place: 'Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "*Rabboni*!" (which means Teacher).'

Piero Boitani, in *The Bible and its Rewritings*, shows how this encounter lies behind scenes of recognition that haunt the Western imagination.[14] They typically centre on a woman, and one character has usually assumed the other to be dead. T. S. Eliot described the recognition scene in Shakespeare's *Pericles* as the finest ever written: the reunion after sixteen years of Pericles and his lost daughter Marina takes place in an atmosphere created by the associations of this passage in John. As the first of the late plays, *Pericles* adumbrates themes of loss and restoration that run also through the others. At the climactic moment in *The Winter's Tale*, Leontes recognizes that the supposed statue of Hermione, the wife he had thought long dead, is her living self. The scene evokes and enacts

14. P. Boitani, *The Bible and its Rewritings* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 145–57.

the ancient idea of a statue as the vehicle of epiphany. It is in an obvious sense an artificial contrivance, yet the encounter takes place in a chapel, and seems to enact also the idea of resurrection. Recognition and recovery of the lost, in the late Shakespeare plays as in the stories of Joseph and of the Prodigal Son, give the uncanny sense of a return from the dead.

Recognition linked to revelatory narrative and hospitality is central to Luke's story of the supper at Emmaus. Towards evening, on the day when the women have found the empty tomb, two of the followers of Jesus (as yet unbelieving) set out for the village of Emmaus. As they discuss what has happened, Jesus draws near and walks with them: 'But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.' The stranger asks about their conversation. One of them asks in amazement if he can be the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know about the dramatic events of recent days. And so, like Odysseus among the Phaeacians, Jesus is told a story (albeit distorted and incomplete) about himself: the prophet seemingly so powerful in word and deed, expected to redeem Israel, had been condemned and crucified. The location of Emmaus is not certain, but the strong probability is that it is the place of that name referred to in 1 Maccabees and in Josephus where, almost exactly 200 years before the traditional date of the crucifixion, the Jewish rebel leader Judas Maccabaeus won his first major victory over the Syrian king, Antiochus IV Epiphanes, who had tried to destroy Jewish worship and identity (1 Macc. 3:38–4:25). Luke surely expects us to pick up the clue: the two companions are walking to a site steeped in memories of an earlier redeeming of Israel. They expect a conquering hero, and their preoccupation with battles long ago prevents them from seeing the significance of what Luke presents as the greater victory won by the unrecognized stranger who walks with them.

> And he said to them, 'O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?' And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. So they drew near to the village to which they were going, but they constrained him, saying, 'Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent.' So he went in to stay with them. When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened and they recognised him; and he vanished out of their sight. They said to each other. 'Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the scriptures?'
>
> (Luke 24:25-32)

Recognition and miraculous departure are closely connected and almost simultaneous, as they were in the story of Telemachus and Athene. Luke, like John, uses ring composition. The divine visitor at Emmaus corresponds to Gabriel at the Annunciation, and the recognition scene here echoes the recognition of the unborn Jesus by the unborn John, who leaps in the womb of Elizabeth when she is visited by the expectant Mary. Recognitions of Jesus thus extend beyond his

life at both ends (as indeed do failures of recognition or acceptance, the impaired vision on the Emmaus road balancing the striking dumb of Zechariah). The two companions here also echo the shepherds, who likewise go eagerly into town with news after a divine visitation. At the end of his gospel, as at its opening, Luke deliberately adopts the style and manner of the Septuagint.

Like Odysseus in Scherie, Jesus takes over as a more informed and authoritative narrator of his own story. As with the songs of Troy sung by Demodocus, recognition is precipitated by retrospective narrative. The two companions only now learn the true sense of familiar passages of scripture (and of earlier sayings of Jesus himself). A pattern in history is recognized because a person has been recognized. That pattern is on a grand scale: it is the vision of Luke himself that we stand at a turning point of time. The two are shown a new trajectory in and from the Scriptures, and the reader likewise sees a pattern not just in the Hebrew texts, but in what they have read so far of the gospel. The story offers a parable about the interpretation of texts, and about the perspective and imagination that that process demands.

The recognition is in two stages: an increase of understanding as the Scriptures are explained on the road, then full and personal recognition at the table. The request to 'stay with us' has a resonance beyond its immediate context. The divine guest enters (at evening, as in many classical theoxeny stories) what we infer to be the humble home of Cleopas: taking the initiative in blessing and breaking the bread, just as he took over as narrator, he is in effect acknowledged as the host. Full recognition comes now, the opening of the 'holden' eyes a symbol of deeper understanding. There is a moment of recognition for the reader too, for we realize that this is the first Christian communion service, the first re-enactment of the Last Supper. The order of events in the house of Cleopas reflects a simple liturgy: the Scriptures are read and expounded; then the bread is shared. The earthly life of Jesus has ended, a new stage has begun, and the theme of Luke's second volume is advertised in advance. Like many classical theoxeny stories, this is an account of a significant beginning. Like the account of the hospitality of Abraham, it is instinct with promise for the future.

As a pendent, I turn finally to the story in Acts of Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch. An angel prompts the apostle to go down to the desert road from Jerusalem to Gaza:

> And behold, an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a minister of Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of all her treasure, had come to Jerusalem to worship and was returning; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. And the Spirit said to Philip, 'Go up and join this chariot.' So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and asked, 'Do you understand what you are reading?' And he said, 'How can I, unless someone guides me?' And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. Now the passage of the scripture which he was reading was this: As a sheep led to the slaughter or as a lamb before its shearer is dumb, so he opens not his mouth. In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken up from the earth.

> And the eunuch said to Philip, 'About whom, pray, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?' Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this scripture he told him the good news of Jesus.
>
> (Acts 8:27-35, quoting Isa. 53:7-8)

When they shortly afterwards come to some water, the eunuch asks to be baptized; this done, Philip is caught up by the Spirit and disappears, and the eunuch goes on his way, rejoicing. The story is a meditation on the act of reading – in Greek *anagnôsis*, a word closely linked to *anagnôrisis*: one here becomes the other. As Terence Cave puts it, *anagnôrisis* 'has always contained the germ of an equivocation between reading and recognizing';[15] a literary device is also a description of literary experience, as we saw already with Odysseus telling his tale to the Phaeacians. There are echoes of Emmaus: the stranger met on the road, the invitation for him to stay, his role in revealing the sense of Scripture, his enacting of a Christian rite and his disappearance. The encounter of the companions with the resurrected Jesus is rewritten as the encounter of a reader with a text, and the figure miraculously risen from the tomb becomes the figure no less miraculously risen from the page.

15. Cave, *Recognitions*, 260.

14

Hesiod's *Theogony* and the Book of Revelation 4, 12 and 19–20

Bruce Louden

The Book of Revelation, among the latest books of the New Testament,[1] structures much of its narrative using motifs and type-scenes common to some of the oldest myths. While commentators often place Revelation in the context of episodes from the Old Testament (e.g. Ford),[2] many of the traditional structures it employs occur in other mythical traditions as well.[3] A dragon that seeks to dominate or rule the cosmos, defeated by a victorious god, corresponds to Tiamat defeated by Marduk in the *Enuma Elish*, and to Typhoeus' defeat by Zeus in Hesiod's *Theogony*. A battle between different groups of gods occurs in the *Enuma Elish*, *The Baal Cycle* and, again, in the *Theogony*, between the Titans and the Olympians.

Scholars have long recognized that Hesiod's *Theogony* incorporates motifs, type-scenes or episodes found in Near Eastern myth.[4] Hesiod's version of the succession myth and the climactic encounter with Typhoeus both have strong affiliations with earlier myths from various cultures,[5] Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Anatolian and Northwest Semitic (the Ugaritic texts, and their later descendants or counterparts: the Homeric Phoenicians/Sidonians, the biblical Canaanites).

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1. Though we lack consensus on the date, I follow Suggs *et al*.: 'the book in its present form probably was written during the reign of Domitian (81–96 CE.).' M. Jack Suggs, Katharine Doob Sakenfeld & James R. Mueller (eds), *The Oxford Study Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press 1992), 1556; cf. John J. Collins, *The Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism. vol. 1: The Origins of Apocalypticism in Judaism and Christianity* (New York: Continuum 2000), 386–7.
2. J. Massyngberde Ford, *Revelation: Introduction, Translation and Commentary*, *The Anchor Bible* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1975).
3. See Clifford on the roots of apocalypticism, in general, in ancient Near Eastern myth. Richard J. Clifford, S. J., 'The Roots of Apocalypticism in Near Eastern Myth', *The Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism*, Collins, 3–38.
4. Among many studies, see especially Martin L. West, *Hesiod: Theogony. Edited with Prolegomena and Commentary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966); *idem*, *The East Face of Helicon: West Asiatic Elements in Greek Poetry and Myth* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), and, more recently, Carolina López-Ruiz, *When the Gods Were Born: Greek Cosmogonies and the Near East* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010).
5. For example, *The Enuma Elish* and *The Song of Kumarbi*, among others.

Scholars have also demonstrated that Old Testament myth shares common ground with narratives from these same four traditions. Because of these parallel patterns of cultural interaction, some Old Testament narratives offer a number of parallels with Hesiod's *Theogony*. For instance, the Old Testament briefly incorporates a mythic type resembling succession myth (Deut. 32:8-9),[6] where different gods draw lots to determine their portions (as at *Iliad* 15.187–93), and repeatedly mentions the defeat of the great dragon, known variously as Leviathan and Rahab (Job 9:8, 26:12-13; Ps. 74:13-14, 89:10; Isa. 27:1, 51:9-10).

While connections between Old Testament myth and the Near Eastern cultural traditions noted have become well known,[7] less attention has been paid to connections between *New* Testament myth and Greek mythic traditions.[8] Gunkel exposed Revelation 12's affiliation with elements of creation myth in general, arguing for close affinity with Babylonian myth in specific, in his landmark 1895 study.[9] Perhaps most important, for my purposes here, is his documentation of how *several* ancient mythic traditions refashion elements from the creation myth, the defeat of a primordial Dragon that allows Creation to occur, employing them for a depiction of the end times. Thus Revelation 12, as Gunkel persuasively demonstrates, unexpectedly has much in common with several episodes in Hesiod's version of the Greek creation myth. However, Gunkel himself downplays the likelihood of any Greek influence in Revelation.[10]

Among the few studies noting Revelation's correspondences with Greek myth, Fontenrose, following Gunkel, identifies the dragon in Revelation 12 as an instance of the traditional mythic genre, the 'combat myth'. [11] A. Y. Collins, building on Fontenrose in particular, argued that Revelation 12's version of the combat myth reworks Apollo's defeat of Python.[12] The pregnant 'woman',

6. See discussion in López-Ruiz, *When the Gods Were Born*; Bruce Louden, 'Iapetós and Japheth: Hesiod's Theogony, Iliad 15.187–93, and Genesis 9–10', *Illinois Classical Studies* XXXVIII (2013), 1–22.
7. On interconnections between Ugaritic myth and the Old Testament, see Mark S. Smith, *The Early History of God: Yahweh and the Other Deities in Ancient Israel* (San Francisco, CA: HarperCollins, 1990); *idem*, *The Origins of Biblical Monotheism: Israel's Polytheistic Background and the Ugaritic Texts* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001). On the essentially Babylonian character of much of Gen., see David M. Carr, *Reading the Fractures of Genesis: Historical and Literary Approache*s (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996).
8. For some recent exceptions, see John Taylor, *Classics and the Bible: Hospitality and Recognition* (London: Duckworth, 2007); Bruce Louden, *Homer's* Odyssey *and the Near East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 258–82.
9. See the recent English translation: Hermann Gunkel, *Creation and Chaos in the Primeval Era and the Eschaton: A Religio-Historical Study of Genesis 1 and Revelation 12* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006).
10. Gunkel, *Creation and Chaos*, 138, 181–8.
11. Joseph Fontenrose, *Python: A Study of Delphic Myth and Its Origins* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1959), 210.
12. Adela Yarbro Collins, *The Combat Myth in the Book of Revelation*, Harvard Theological Review, 9 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1976).

whose offspring the dragon threatens to devour, would then correspond to Leto. While her argument has considerable merit, I will argue that Hesiod's *Theogony*, in its account of Zeus and Typhoeus, and Kronos' attempted swallowing of the infant Zeus, not only offers a version of the combat motif closer to that in Revelation 12, but also provides backgrounds and contexts for other episodes: the eternally singing choir (4), the war in heaven (12), and the dragon's defeat as he is cast into the lake of fire (19–20).

While some parallels between Revelation and the *Theogony* could result from both texts drawing on the same Near Eastern cultural traditions, having corresponding geneses, I will argue that the specific forms of a number of motifs are too close to be explained away by indirect influence. This study will analyse the common ground Revelation shares with the *Theogony* for several different reasons. First, by analysing the parallels in both narratives, each given genre of myth can be more thoroughly understood, after considering both the parallels and divergences offered by the complement. Second, I will argue that Hesiod's *Theogony* functions as a sort of master text behind several sections of Revelation, serving as a structure to be partly emulated, as a vessel to be filled with somewhat similar contents, and as a structuring and framing mechanism. Our study will reveal Revelation to be a product of its time.[13]

However, due to fundamental differences between polytheism and monotheism, and a desire to validate and privilege its own religion, Revelation significantly transforms whatever Hesiodic materials it finds useful. Given monotheism's smaller cast of divine characters, in some instances Revelation must fuse and combine multiple characters into one, even fuse multiple episodes into one. For example, I will argue that Revelation finds Hesiod's accounts of both Kronos and Typhoeus useful for its own agenda, but fuses these two characters into one: the dragon of Revelation 12. However, since Kronos figures in two separate episodes in Hesiod (the immortal who attempts to swallow the newborn immortal destined to rule over all, and the immortal who leads a group of gods who are defeated by those loyal to the newborn ruler), and Typhoeus in a third (the immortal dragon that wants to rule the cosmos), by fusing the two figures, Kronos and Typhoeus, into one, Revelation 12 transforms and combines into one what are, in Hesiod, three separate episodes. In another type of fusion, Revelation finds the *Theogony*'s Rhea a relevant model for its own purposes, as the figure of the goddess, queen of Heaven, whose most important offspring another immortal is waiting to devour. But Revelation imbues her with attributes more typical of depictions of Isis from its own era.[14] These fusions help demonstrate how the 'woman' of Revelation 12 can be coherently interpreted, variously, as Mary, Israel and/or the Church.

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13. Collins, *The Combat Myth in the Book of Revelation*, 2: 'There are also certain key motifs in Revelation which … can only be explained as adaptations of Greco-Roman mythology and political propaganda.'
14. Cf. *ibid.,* 58: 'It would seem that the author of Revelation was consciously attempting to be international by incorporating and fusing traditional elements from a variety of cultures.'

The common ground between the *Theogony* and Revelation also underscores how traditional much of this New Testament text is, which can serve as a check against certain wild readings and interpretations. The Hesiodic backdrop also reveals a startling syncretism at work in biblical narrative, which exists for differing reasons. I will propose that Revelation not only draws upon the *Theogony* for material, but consciously *engages* Hesiod's narrative, intending itself as a corrective, for its own audience, of the *Theogony*'s own narrative agendas.

Some of these concerns will be evident in how Revelation employs the same basic motifs as Hesiod, but does so with a very different purpose. Revelation frames its presentation as primarily *visual*, much of it being an extended instance of a frequently recurring genre of myth, *the vision*, which we can characterize as follows: *The protagonist is removed from the mortal plane; an otherworldly guide accompanies him, who reveals to him a larger truth, the 'big picture', previously unknown to him. He is a transformed man as a result*.[15] Second, Revelation depicts events as if they will occur in the future, employing its primal mythic motifs for eschatological concerns. Hesiod's text, other than the opening interactions with the Muses, depicts the distant past, and only briefly suggests a structure like the vision. Revelation, following the tradition of prophetic books of the Old Testament such as Daniel and Isaiah, uses a symbolic, coded language, for an audience in which it expects some competence in following the implied code. Hesiod's narrative seems less multidimensional in this respect. Last, Revelation addresses a specific historical context, the Second Jewish Revolt and the Roman response to it (66–70 CE). Its intended audience is originally one living in that time, or in its immediate aftermath. The *Theogony* does not appear to have any such specific concern, or if it does, it addresses it with less intensity and less evidence.

We will trace the following series of corresponding motifs common to Revelation and the *Theogony*:

(1) *In an introductory scene, the narrator interacts with some of the immortal characters*.
(2) *A heavenly choir ceaselessly hymns praises of the Heavenly Father*.
(a) *Both choirs are connected with a similar formula denoting divine knowledge*.
(3) *An immortal being waits to devour the immortal offspring of a goddess.*
(a) *The goddess safely gives birth, taking refuge in a place prepared for her*.
(b) *The special child, who is to rule over all, is whisked away to safety*.
(c) *He is immediately handed over to another immortal*.

15. See discussion in Bruce Louden, '*Retrospective Prophecy* and *the Vision* in *Aeneid* 6 and the Book of Revelation', *International Journal of the Classical Tradition*, 16 (2009), 1–18; *idem*, *Homer's* Odyssey *and the Near East*, 204–21. Consider Collins's characterization: 'a description of visions and auditions of heavenly origin.' Collins, *The Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism*, 387.

(4) *A war breaks out in heaven between two groups of immortals*.
(a) *The defeated group of immortals is imprisoned below/in the underworld*.
(5) *A multi-headed dragon that wants to rule the cosmos is defeated, imprisoned below/in the underworld*.
(a) *The dragon is one of a series of monsters*.
(b) *Even after defeat, he continues to harass mortals*.
(c) *In his final defeat, the chief god overcomes him with superior firepower*.

In both works, numbers 1 and 2 are part of a connected unit near the beginning of the respective narratives, whereas numbers 3–5 are part of another connected unit occurring much later in each work.

(1) In an introductory scene, the narrator interacts with some of the immortal characters (*Theogony* 20–34; Revelation 1:1, 4:1 and ff.)

Each work figures the narrator as a character who has privileged relations with the gods, and interacts with them. This is opposite to the way of Homeric epic (one of many indications the *Theogony* should *not* be classified as epic), and helps align Hesiod's work with prophetic works in the Old and New Testament. The nature of the narrators' interactions is quite distinct, in accord with significant cultural differences.

In the *Theogony*, the Muses appear to Hesiod while he is herding his flocks (22–34). They teach him to become a divinely inspired singer (22); he subsequently refers to himself as their servant (Μουσάων θεράπων: 100). The discourse he learns from them is privileged (ἀληθέα γηρύσασθαι: 28); he receives it directly from them (ἐνέπνευσαν δέ μοι αὐδὴν / θέσπιν: 31–2).

The narrator of Revelation is figured more as a prophet (τῆς προφητείας: 1.3), whereas Hesiod is figured as an inspired singer. However, as West notes, in connection with Hesiod's expression, τά τ' ἐσσόμενα πρό τ' ἐόντα (discussed below), 'The phrase expresses the close connexion between poetry and prophecy which is widespread in early literature.'[16]

As in Hesiod, John is directly addressed, and not named, by an immortal (Ἀνάβη ὧδε, καὶ δείξω σοι ἃ δεῖ γενέσθαι μετὰ ταῦτα: 4:1), though then somehow transported to heaven rather than the immortal coming to him on earth, as in Hesiod. He is later commanded to write down what he sees (Γράψον, ὅτι οὗτοι οἱ λόγοι πιστοὶ καὶ ἀληθινοί εἰσιν: 21:5; cf. γράψον οὖν ἃ εἶδες καὶ ἅ μέλλει γίνεσθαι μετὰ ταῦτα: 1:19). As in Hesiod, the privileged nature of the contents is emphasized, both narratives asserting so with similar diction (ἀληθέα γηρύσασθα; οἱ λόγοι πιστοὶ καὶ ἀληθινοί εἰσιν).

16. West, *Hesiod: Theogony*, 166. Cf. discussion in López-Ruiz, *When the Gods Were Born*, 53–4, of parallels that commentators have noted between Hesiod and Moses, and other Old Testament prophets.

In both narratives, the in-person interaction is risky and fearful for the mortal. The Muses address Hesiod in disparaging words: Ποιμένες ... κάκ' ἐλέγχεα, γαστέρες οἶον, 'Shepherds … shameful, wicked things, mere bellies' (26). John faints when he first sees Jesus: 'I fell before his feet like a corpse' (ἔπεσα πρὸς τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ ὡς νεκρός: 1:17). But the latter reassures him, again stressing the connection between what John reports, and a divine truth (ἅ μέλλει γίνεσθαι μετὰ ταῦτα: 1:19).

Both works further specify that those who receive the divine guidance and instruction depicted will be fortunate or blessed: 'fortunate is he, whomever the Muses love' (ὃ δ' ὄλβιος, ὅν τινα Μοῦσαι / φίλονται, *Theogony*, 96); 'blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy' (μακάριος ὁ ἀναγινώσκων καὶ οἱ ἀκούοντες τοὺς λόγους τῆς προφητείας, Revelation 1:3).

(2) A heavenly choir ceaselessly hymns the praises of the Heavenly Father (*Theogony* 1–115; Revelation 4:8-9)

In Hesiod, the Muses, the same immortal beings who have direct interaction with him, also constitute the heavenly choir. The *Theogony* opens with an elaborate hymn to them (1–115), delineating their special attributes and functions. Their voice is immortal (ἄμβροτον ὄσσαν ἱεῖσαι: 43); it flows without interruption (ἀκάμτος ῥέει αὐδὴ: 39); song is their sole concern (ἦσιν ἀοιδὴ / μέμβλεται ἐν στήθεσσιν: 60–61). While they celebrate the deeds of all the immortals (πάντων τε νόμους καὶ ἤθεα κεδνὰ / ἀθανάτων κλείουσιν: 66–7), they specifically sing hymns in praise of Zeus (ὑμνεῦσαι Δία: 11; ταὶ Διὶ πατρὶ / ὑμνεῦσαι τέρπουσι μέγαν νόον ἐντος Ὀλύμπου: 36–7; cf. 51–2). They instruct Hesiod to sing of them, first and last (πρῶτόν τε καὶ ὕστατον αἰὲν ἀείδειν: 34), as they themselves begin and end their song with Zeus (ἀρχόμεναί θ' ὑμνεῦσι καὶ ἐκλήγουσαι ἀοιδῆς: 48).

John's revelation proper begins with his description of what he sees after having been told to ascend (Ἀνάβα), in a vision, to heaven. Prominent among the strange beings John describes are the four *zoas*, with the heads of a lion, ox, human and eagle, each having six wings, and covered with eyes (4:6-8). Though Revelation takes their basic form from Ezekiel 1:5ff.,[17] their multi-formity is also quite reminiscent of two passages in the *Theogony*; descriptions of the Chimera (319–24) and Typhoeus (824–35, discussed below). The Chimera has three heads, the first, as with the *zoas*, a lion, the second and third, a goat and a serpent. John describes the *zoas*' activity:

> And they make no pause by day or by night, saying,
> 'Holy, Holy, Holy is God, the Lord, the Creator of All,
> who was, who is, and who is going to be.'
> καὶ ἀνάπαυσιν οὐκ ἔχουσιν ἡμέρας καὶ νυκτὸς λέγοντες,

17. See discussion in Elaine Pagels, *Revelations: Visions, Prophecy, and Politics in the Book of Revelation* (New York: Viking Press, 2012), 41–3.

Ἅγιος, ἅγιος, ἅγιος Κύριος ὁ Θεὸς ὁ Παντοκράτωρ,
ὁ ἦν καὶ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος. (4:8)

The text's 'speaking', λέγοντες, is commonly understood to denote singing.[18] As in Hesiod, their singing is without interruption; their subject is the Supreme God. Their special epithet for him, ὁ Παντοκράτωρ, 'The Creator of All Things', is similar to the epithets Hesiod's Muses use of Zeus, 'The Father Both of Gods and Men' (θεῶν πατέρ' ἠδὲ καὶ ἀνδρῶν: 47). In a difference that is in keeping with larger tendencies already observed, John is before the heavenly choir in heaven, whereas Hesiod depicts the Muses in like activity, but without specifying his own presence before them on Olympus. His interaction occurs earlier, on the earthly plane.

(a) Both heavenly choirs are depicted with a similar formula denoting divine knowledge

Hesiod describes how the Muses sing on Olympus for Zeus, 'singing the things that are, and those that will be, and those that were before' (εἰρεῦσαι τά τ' ἐόντα τά τ' ἐσσόμενα πρό τ' ἐόντα: 38). They have also bequeathed a similar ability to Hesiod himself, that he, by means of their divine inspiration (31) can similarly sing, τά τ' ἐσσόμενα πρό τ' ἐόντα (32), 'the things that will be, and the things that were'. As noted, Revelation's heavenly choir gives glory to the one, 'who was, who is, and who is going to be' (ὁ ἦν καὶ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος: 4:8).

The Muses lack a counterpart in Near Eastern cultures, 'The Muses are, so far as we know, purely Greek creatures, and have no counterpart in the orient.'[19] While passages in Psalms offer partial antecedents for Revelation's depiction of the four *zoas* hymning (Ps. 89:5: 'Let the heavens praise your wonders, Lord; let the assembly of angels exalt your faithfulness'; 113:1: Praise the Lord, you that are his servants'; 148:2: 'Praise him, all his angels'; 149:1: 'Sing to the Lord a new song, his praise in the assembly of his loyal servants!'),[20] they lack the specific formula that the *Theogony* includes.

Both narratives employ the motifs so far considered to establish their narrators' credentials. Hesiod and John have both been in the presence of the immortal characters, and interacted with them. Each narrative now transitions to other episodes, serving divergent narrative agendas. Later, however, both again turn to a group of interconnected episodes that correspond with each other. In both narratives, the next cluster of motifs features first as prelude to, then an account of, a war between two different groups of immortals. Both wars are triggered by the birth of the new immortal (Zeus, Christ), destined to rule over all.

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18. For example, Ford, *Revelation: Introduction, Translation and Commentary*, 79–80: 'There is a continual sound of heavenly singing both from the living creatures and the elders … songs of praise'; cf. LSJ (*Liddell–Scott–Jones Greek–English Lexicon*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 12, λέγω: 'sing'.
19. West, *The East Face of Helicon*, 170.
20. Passages from the Old Testament are from Suggs *et al*., *The Oxford Study Bible*.

(3) An immortal being waits to devour the immortal offspring of a 'goddess' (*Theogony* 459–66; Revelation 12:4-5)

Kronos, learning a prophecy that one of his offspring will supplant him, resolves on swallowing his children as they are born (καὶ τοὺς μὲν κατέπινε μέγας Κρόνος: 459–62; παῖδας ἑοὺς κατέπινε: 466–7; cf. 479–80). Each time his Titan wife, Rhea, gives birth, he swallows (κατέπινε: 467, 473) the newborn child (459–62). Immortal, they do not perish when he does so, but remain alive, and will later re-emerge, unharmed. Zeus is the child, foretold in prophecy, who will be stronger than Kronos and replace him as ruler of the gods, whose birth Kronos tries to prevent.[21]

Revelation 12 begins focusing on a 'woman' (γυνή) in heaven (τῷ οὐρανῷ), 'wearing' (περιβεβλημένη) the sun, the moon beneath her, garlanded with a corona of twelve stars, about to give birth. As the extraordinary description suggests, she is clearly *not* a woman. In perhaps the three most common interpretations, she is Israel, the Church or Mary. In some respects, she also suggests a Mother Earth figure. From a first-century perspective and context, she is a goddess.[22] She is positioned in heaven. Particulars of her description resemble Apuleius' depiction of Isis in her theophany (*Golden Ass*, 11.3–7). A great fiery-red dragon (δράκων πυρρὸς μέγας), with seven heads and ten horns, is waiting to devour (καταφάγῃ) her offspring.

While Collins' suggestion that the 'woman' reflects Leto, pursued by Python,[23] has merit, I argue the *Theogony*'s Rhea offers more correspondences. As the daughter of Ouranos (132–5), wife of the second sky father, Kronos, and often called 'the mother of the gods',[24] Rhea is not only a 'queen of Heaven', but her special position as mother of Zeus parallels 'the woman' as mother of Christ, each the central figure of their respective religions.[25] Hershbell sums up the central trajectory of the *Theogony* in ways parallel to Revelation's depiction of Christ: it has 'the unmistakable purpose of identifying the birth and subsequent reign of Zeus as the climax of cosmic history'.[26] In these particulars, Rhea is closer, in a number of ways, to Mary's larger functions as mother of Christ,[27]

21. See West, *Hesiod: Theogony*, 290–91, for discussion of some Hittite parallels in the myth of Kumarbi.
22. Cf. Collins, *The Combat Myth in the Book of Revelation*, 71–6.
23. *Ibid*., 66, 75, 84, 128.
24. The *Theogony* (453–8) depicts her as mother, in addition to Zeus, of Poseidon, Hades, Hera, Demeter and Hestia.
25. Jenny Strauss Clay, *Hesiod's Cosmos* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 13: 'The *Theogony* … leads to the formation of a stable cosmos and ultimately achieves its *telos* under the tutelage of Zeus.'
26. Jackson B. Hershbell, 'Hesiod and Empedocles', *The Classical Journal* 65 (1970), 145–61 (152).
27. As Ford notes (*Revelation: Introduction, Translation and Commentary*, 189), the same expression Rev. 12:2 uses to denote the 'woman's' pregnancy is also used at Matt. 1:18 and 23, of Mary.

than is Leto. No extant version of the myth of Apollo depicts Python as specifically attempting to *swallow* Leto's offspring. This is not only a central motif in the *Theogony*, but Rhea is the only 'queen of Heaven' figure whose offspring is threatened with this specific act. Revelation 12, thus, would seem to appropriate Rhea's defining roles from the *Theogony*, but imbue her with characteristics of Isis from its own era, resulting in the composite figure of 'the woman'. Both Rhea and the 'woman' are suffering, in pain (πένθος ἄλαστον: 467; καὶ κράζει ὠδίνουσα καὶ βασανιζομένη τεκεῖν: 12:2),[28] for which dilemma Leto remains relevant.

(a) The 'goddess' safely gives birth, taking refuge in a place prepared for her

In the *Theogony*, Rhea, about to bear Zeus (468–9), is advised ahead of time by Gaia how to give birth in secret (477). Rhea goes to Lyktos on Crete, escaping detection by Kronos (479–80), safely giving birth to Zeus, her youngest child. Kronos and Revelation's dragon are both easily prevented from carrying out their attempted ingestions. The *Theogony* implies Kronos' failure to carry out his threat results from his earlier wrongdoing (τίσαιτο δ' ἐρινῦς πατρὸς ἑοῖο / παίδων θ': 472–3), 'that he requite the wrongs he did his father and children'. In what seems a comic modality, Kronos swallows a boulder[29] wrapped in swaddling clothes (487), thinking it is Zeus.

In Revelation 12, the 'woman' similarly escapes the dragon, fleeing into the wilderness (τὴν ἔρημον: 12:5), to a place prepared for her by God (ἐκεῖ τόπον ἡτοιμασμένον ἀπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ), paralleling the divine advice Rhea receives from Gaia and Ouranos.[30] In both myths, the 'goddess' gives birth in safety, despite the earlier threat of having her offspring swallowed. The 'woman' is given two wings of an eagle, so she can fly to her place in the wilderness, out of reach of the dragon (καὶ ἐδόθησαν τῇ γυναικὶ αἱ δύο πτέρυγες τοῦ ἀετοῦ τοῦ μεγάλου, ἵνα πέτηται εἰς τὴν ἐρημον εἰς τὸν τόπον αὐτῆς: 12:14). The eagle's wings correspond to the power of movement Rhea naturally has as a goddess. Revelation 12's 'woman' will be looked after for 1,260 days, in the special place that was prepared for her (12:6).

(b) The special child, who is to rule over all, is whisked away to safety

In each myth, the special child whom the other immortal tries to devour is the central figure in each respective religion. Zeus is figured as a new kind of divine ruler, who rules with a larger perspective, more justly than Kronos. Rapidly reaching maturity, he first sets free his brethren (501–2), who, in gratitude,

28. Cf. Ford (*Revelation: Introduction, Translation and Commentary*, 197): 'her painful childbirth'; and Le Frois's translation, 'and is in anguish to bring forth'.
29. In a link with Apollo's myth, when Kronos later vomits up the stone, Zeus sets it in Delphi.
30. Ouranos' frequent epithet, ἀστερόεις, 'starry, star-spangled' (*Theogony* 106, 463, 470, 891, and in the *Homeric Hymns* to Gê and Helios), overlaps with Rev. 12's 'woman', στέφανος ἀστέρων δώδεκα.

give him thunder, thunderbolt and lightning (503–5) as his weapons. In the *Theogony*'s conclusion, the other gods are eager to have him as ruler (883), as he, on Gaia's advice, establishes the respective offices and honours among the other gods, and, in contrast with Kronos, will be associated (806–903) with intelligence (μῆτις), order (εὐνομία), justice (δίκη) and peace (εἰρήνη), as he guides events in accord with a big-picture conception of fate or destiny (μοίραι). Kronos implicitly ruled without these same principles.

Revelation 12's newborn child is destined to rule over all with an iron rod (ὃς μέλλει ποιμαίνειν πάντα τὰ ἔθνη ἐν ῥαβδῳ σιδηρᾷ: 12:5). However, where the *Theogony* clearly establishes Zeus as sole ruler of the cosmos, in Revelation, both the Father and the Son seem to rule over mankind (αὐτῷ ἡ δόξα καὶ τὸ κράτος εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων: 1:6; ὁ Παντοκράτωρ: 1:8). In this respect, and others, Revelation employs a relatively polytheistic conception.

(c) He is immediately handed over to another immortal

In the *Theogony*, having safely given birth to Zeus, Rhea entrusts the newborn to *Gaia* to nourish and rear, Gaia hiding him in an inaccessible cave beneath the 'sacred earth' (481–4). In Revelation 12, as soon as the special child is born, he is immediately taken up by another immortal, 'and her child was snatched up to God, to his throne' (καὶ ἡρπάσθη τὸ τέκνον αὐτῆς πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν καὶ πρὸς τὸν θρόνον αὐτοῦ: 12:5).

(4) A war breaks out in heaven between two groups of immortals (*Theogony* 617–735; Revelation 12:7-9)

In both myths, as a consequence of the birth of the special son, war breaks out between two groups of immortals, because the new immortal is seen as a threat to the group opposing him. In both myths, the leader of the immortals hostile to the newborn ruler is the same figure that had attempted to swallow him, Kronos and the dragon. In both myths, the new immortal ruler's maturation is not depicted, but seems almost instantaneous.

In Hesiod, the war between the Olympians and the Titans develops into a major episode, starting out as a revolt of the younger Olympian gods against the elder Titans.[31] Tension builds earlier, in the testy exchanges between Zeus and Prometheus (535–64, cf. 613–16), and references to Atlas and Menoitios imprisoned in the underworld (514–20), but when Hesiod segues to the *Titanomachy*, the two sides have already been at war for ten years, in a stalemate (629–38).

Revelation 12:7-9's account of the war is so unique from the perspective of the Old and New Testaments that commentators often assume it derives from an unknown, extra-biblical source, as Ford notes,

31. West, *Hesiod: Theogony*, 337.

> Vss. 6-13 seem to come from another source and to interrupt the flow of the thought between 12:5 and 12:14 … Neither the war in heaven or Michael are mentioned elsewhere in our text … in the NT Michael occurs only here and in Jude 9.[32]

Such an assessment supports my argument that Hesiod's *Theogony* serves as a master source for the episode in Revelation.[33]

In Revelation 12's account of the war, one third of the angels rebel, forming Satan's faction. While no specific cause is given (Revelation 12:7 simply states, Καὶ ἐγένετο πόλεμος ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, 'And there was war in heaven'), the sequence of events demonstrates the war is a consequence of the birth of Christ. Unlike in Hesiod, Revelation 12's war seems quite brief. The two sides are quickly delineated, 'Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; the dragon with his angels fought back' (ὁ Μιχαὴλ καὶ οἱ ἄγγελοι αὐτοῦ τοῦ πολεμῆσαι μετὰ τοῦ δράκοντος· καὶ ὁ δράκων ἐπολέμησεν καὶ οἱ ἄγγελοι αὐτοῦ: 12:7), and the outcome of the war is immediately apparent, 'but they did not prevail, and no place in heaven was found for them' (καὶ οὐκ ἴσχυσαν, οὐδὲ τόπος εὑρέθη αὐτῶν ἔτι ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ: 12:8).

In both myths, other immortals are individuated playing key roles in the outcomes of the war. In Revelation, the angel Michael is the greatest warrior, with the immortal combatants who are fighting alongside him referred to as his angels (12:7). Christ is figured as the chief warrior in a later battle (19:11-21). In Hesiod, Zeus is the greatest warrior, but a pivotal role is also assigned to the three figures, Briareos, Kottos and Gyês, giants with tremendous (if unspecified) powers, whom Ouranos had earlier imprisoned in the underworld (626–8). It is Gaia who decisively alters the war's earlier stalemate, through her suggestion that Zeus bring Briareos, Kottos and Gyês up from the underworld, to ensure victory for the Olympians (713–21).[34] Zeus' triumph is that of a younger god over an elder.

*(a) The defeated group of immortals is imprisoned below/in the underworld (*Theogony *722–819; Revelation 12:9, 19:20, 20:1-3, 10, 14)*

The *Theogony* several times refers to the defeated immortals who fought against Zeus and the Olympians. Earlier episodes note those imprisoned in the

32. Ford, *Revelation: Introduction, Translation and Commentary*, 205. Cf. on 12:6-13, 'Many scholars argue that the text was not originally Christian. It omits all reference to the earthly life, work, death, and resurrection of Christ, and attributes a passive and subordinate role to the Messiah: Satan is overcome by Michael, not by the Messiah' (*ibid*., 193).

33. Judaism developed a tradition depicting a rebellion in heaven by Satan, hinted at in the Old Testament, but only fully developed in extra-biblical materials, ultimately deriving from the older Canaanite/Ugaritic account of Athtar. See Collins, *The Combat Myth in the Book of Revelation*, 129, 143.

34. See further discussion of Gaia's role by West, *Hesiod: Theogony*, 24.

underworld, the sons of Iapetos: Atlas, Prometheus and Menoitios, all punished by Zeus, the latter confined to Erebos for unspecified acts (ὑβριστὴν ... ἀτασθαλίης τε καί ἠνορέης ὑπερόπλου: 514–16). Zeus' victory in the war is signalled by the three giants, having defeated the Titans with missiles, hurling them beneath the earth, bound and imprisoned (καὶ τοὺς μὲν ὑπὸ χθονὸς εὐρυοδείης / πέμψαν καὶ δεσμοῖσιν ἐν ἀργαλέοισιν ἔδησαν: 715–18). After the war's conclusion, the *Theogony* details the physical features of their underworld prison, the giants (Briareos, Kottos and Gyês) now serving as prison guards (721–35). The episode segues into a lengthy description of various aspects of Tartaros, and the goddess Styx (736–819).

As in the *Theogony*, Revelation 12's defeated immortals are hurled down from heaven, 'and the great dragon was thrown down … he was hurled down to the earth, and his angels with him' (καὶ ἐβλήθη ὁ δράκων ὁ μέγας ... ἐβλήθη εἰς τὴν γῆν, καὶ οἱ ἄγγελοι αὐτοῦ μετ' αὐτοῦ ἐβλήθησαν: 12:9-10). The motif returns in chapters 19–20 (discussed below).

(5) A multi-headed dragon that wants to rule the cosmos is defeated, imprisoned below/in the underworld (*Theogony* 820–80; Revelation 12:3-17, 19:20, 20:1-3, 10, 14)

Both narratives feature corresponding climactic episodes: the defeat of a fiery, multi-headed dragon. While such a scene is traditional,[35] the dragons of the *Theogony* and Revelation match more closely than most. Both are immortal, opposed to dragons such as Tiamat, Rahab/Leviathan and Python, all of whom are slain by their divine combatants. Typhoeus and Revelation's dragon cannot be slain, and both continue to cause problems for mortals, even after their defeat.

However, two differences in Revelation's and Hesiod's treatments of the dragon have hindered recognition of their deeper correspondences. In a structural difference noted earlier, Revelation 12 fuses into one short chapter what are three separate genres of myth in Hesiod: (1) the immortal being (Kronos) who seeks to devour the special son (Zeus), destined to rule all; (2) the war between two different groups of immortals (Olympians versus Titans, led by Kronos); and (3) the defeat of the immortal dragon (Typhoeus). In Hesiod, Kronos is chief antagonist in the first two mythic genres, while the dragon Typhoeus, a separate character, is in the third. Revelation 12's dragon first parallels Kronos as attempting to swallow the special son (Christ), but is then simultaneously leader of the rebel forces in the war in heaven (Kronos again) and the immortal dragon who will suffer fiery defeat (Typhoeus). In a second difference, Zeus defeats Typhoeus once and for all, whereas Michael defeats Revelation's dragon in chapter 12, but in a later conclusive encounter (20), Christ, Zeus' thematic

35. For the fullest studies, see Fontenrose, *Python*, and Collins, *The Combat Myth in the Book of Revelation*, 57–85.

parallel, defeats him for all time. Despite these differences, the accounts of the two dragons share a number of specific features.

In the *Theogony*, after Zeus, victorious over the Titans, assumes his position as king of Heaven, Gaia bears her last child, the terrible dragon, Typhoeus. Revelation's dragon and Typhoeus are both polycephalic, both thematically associated with fire (πυρός τ' ἀπὸ τοῖο πελώρου: 845). Fire flashes out from the eyes of Typhoeus' 100 heads as he glares from under his brows (825–8). Revelation 12's dragon is 'great, fiery red' (πυρρὸς μέγας: 12:3), and has seven heads and ten horns. Both are called by the same two terms, 'dragon' (δράκων: 825; 12:3) and 'serpent' (ὄφις: 825; 12:9). Both briefly threaten the sovereignty of the cosmos, explicitly so in the *Theogony*, which states that, if not for Zeus, Typhoeus would have ruled (καί νύ κεν … ἄναξεν: 836–7) over mortals and the gods.[36] Revelation 12 hints at this in its emphasis that the expected child, which the dragon seeks to swallow, is destined to rule all the nations (12:5). Both dragons are hurled down to earth after their defeats (858; 12:9).

Typhoeus' challenge to Zeus, the poem's climactic episode, suggests a structural correspondence with the *Theogony*'s first episode, the hymn to the Muses.[37] Typhoeus' hundred heads all project voices, sounds of all kinds. His voices make sounds such as the gods make, but also those of a bellowing bull, a lion, and young animals (828–35). His voices and sounds, an unusual, inarticulate hybrid, present a 'terrifying sonic counterpoint to the Muses'.[38] Revelation suggests a similar structural correspondence, since, from the perspective of Revelation 4, the *Theogony*'s Chimera (319–24) and Typhoeus, particularly his varied voices and sounds, overlap with the multiple animal forms of the four *zoas*, especially the bull and the lion.

Despite their multiple heads and mouths, both Typhoeus and Revelation 12's dragon are denied coherent speech in their respective myths. For all the power and might inherent in Typhoeus' hundred voices, he is unable to put them to any significant purpose. His monstrous potential reflects a basic incompatibility, or instability, between his constituent parts (perhaps implicitly true of the Chimera as well). As Goslin notes, 'the voices of god and beast are shown to be incompatible when combined in one and the same being.'[39] Implicitly, the same instability would apply to his potential rule of the cosmos.

Revelation's dragon, furious after the 'woman' safely gives birth, also responds with a seemingly potent threat from his multiple mouths, 'and the serpent from his mouth threw after the woman water like a river, so that she would be borne away by it' (Καὶ ἔβαλεν ὁ ὄφις ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ ὀπίσω τῆς γυναικὸς ὕδωρ ὡς ποταμόν, ἵνα αὐτὴν ποταμοφόρητον ποιήσῃ: 12:15). However, Gê, Earth, intervenes: 'but Earth came to the woman's aid, and earth

36. For an analysis of the syntax, see Bruce Louden, 'Pivotal Contrafactuals in Homeric Epic', *Classical Antiquity*, 12 (1993), 181–98.
37. Owen Goslin, 'Hesiod's Typhonomachy and the Ordering of Sound', *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, 140(2) (2010), 351–73 (357, 361).
38. *Ibid*., 361.
39. *Ibid*., 362.

opened her mouth and swallowed down the river which the dragon had hurled from his mouth' (καὶ ἐβοήθησεν ἡ γῆ τῇ γυναικὶ, καὶ ἤνοιξεν ἡ γῆ τὸ στόμα καὶ κατέπιεν τὸν ποταμὸν ὃν ἔβαλεν ὁ δράκων ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ: 12:16).

(a) The dragon is part of a thematically related series of monsters

As suggested above, Revelation's dragon also displays multiple correspondences with the *Theogony*'s Chimera, a descendant of Typhoeus. Revelation's dragon is also linked with another monster (though not genetically): the Beast. The Chimera and Revelation 12's dragon are both described with a similar appositive phrase, ἢ δ' ὄφιος, κρατεροῖο δράκοντος (322) and ὁ δράκων ὁ μέγας, ὁ ὄφις ὁ ἀρχαῖος (12:9). The Chimera is also fire-breathing (πνέουσαν ἀμαιμάκετον πῦρ: 319; ἀποπνείουσα πυρὸς μένος αἰθομένοιο: 324).[40] The Chimera occurs in a section of the *Theogony* known as the catalogue of monsters (*Theogony* 270–336), which also references other monsters, including the Hydra (314–18). As West notes, the *Enuma Elish* shares this tendency, a catalogue of monsters linked with the narrative's principal dragon.[41] Heroes slay the *Theogony*'s other monsters: Bellerophon slays the Chimera (325) and Heracles slays the Hydra, with Athena's help (316–18). These instances provide models for why Revelation 12 first has Michael defeat the dragon,[42] but saves the climactic instance for Christ, as the *Theogony* makes Zeus' subduing of Typhoeus its climax.

(b) Even after defeat, he continues to harass mortals

Zeus defeats Typhoeus using thunder and lightning (854–7), burning all the monster's heads; the entire earth boils with heat from the encounter. Zeus then hurls (ἥριπε; 858: ῥῖψε … ἐς Τάρταρον εὐρύν: 868) the defeated dragon down into Tartarus, the section of the underworld reserved for recalcitrant immortals, where the Titans are also imprisoned (cf. *Iliad* 2.780–83). However, the dragon continues to cause problems, now just for mortals: destructive winds, particularly those that cause shipwrecks, issue from him (874–80). As Goslin notes,

> Hesiod ends his account with the effect of the monster's defeat on the *present* day, in which he persists as a force of *disorder and trouble* for men. But if Zeus permits his enemy a circumscribed existence, this is because Typhoeus will serve as a useful negative *exemplum* of the benefits conferred by Zeus' rule on men … the lingering pockets of disorder, represented by Typhoeus' winds, are a lasting reminder that human *technê* is operable only in a cosmos under Zeus' sovereignty.[43]

40. Cf. Apollodorus, *The Library* (1.9.3, 2.3.1).
41. West, *Hesiod: Theogony*, 244.
42. Athena is the Greek god with the most in common with Michael. On her role as Zeus' chief instrument in war, see Bruce Louden, *The Iliad: Structure, Myth, and Meaning* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 214–15, 253, 266–72. In Aeschylus, *Eumenides* 826–8, she is the only god who has the key to Zeus' thunderbolts.
43. Cf. Goslin, 'Hesiod's Typhonomachy', 366. 'Even after his defeat Typhoeus persists as a force of disorder in the form of the destructive winds that occasionally plague men on

According to Hesiod, then, the deadly destructive winds that plague humanity, *typhoons*, are a remnant of the dragon's destructive potential.

What is germinal in Hesiod is fully developed in Revelation. After defeat by Michael, the dragon again pursues the 'woman'. But when she escapes, it decides to wage war (ποιῆσαι πόλεμον) against her descendants who follow Christ (12:17). It gains allies: first going to the sea, he sees the Beast (θηρίον) emerge (13:1-2), commonly understood to signify Nero and Rome (as the *gematria* of 13:18 makes clear).[44] Another Beast emerges from the land (13:11 and ff.). The dragon, with his beasts, leads much of the earth astray. As Collins sums up, 'The dragon = Satan is defeated in heaven (vss. 8–9), but the immediate effect of that defeat is that he exercises a more direct and wrathful control over the earth.'[45]

(c) In his final defeat, the chief god overcomes him with superior 'firepower'

Revelation depicts a later battle (chapters 19–20), when the dragon is defeated for all time, corresponding to Hesiod's account of Typhoeus. First the Beast and his prophet are thrown into a burning lake; 'the two were hurled down into the lake of fire burning in sulfur' (ἐβλήθησαν οἱ δύο εἰς τὴν λίμνην τοῦ πυρὸς τῆς καιομένης ἐν θείῳ: 19:20). While the idea of a burning lake may draw on several traditions, the *Theogony* suggests the kernel of this notion in Typhoeus' defeat, and later accounts make the connection stronger in Typhoeus' association with Mount Aetna's volcanic eruptions.

Zeus' battle with Typhoeus is depicted in elemental terms, and generates fire. Zeus hurls thunderbolts, striking Typhoeus repeatedly. Tremendous heat is given off, emphasized in its effect on the ocean: 'heat from both of them gripped the dark-blue sea' (καῦμα δ' ὑπ' ἀμφοτέρων κάτεχεν ἰοειδέα πόντον: 844); 'and all of earth was seething, and heaven and sea' (ἔζεε δέ χθὼν πᾶσα καὶ οὐρανὸς ἠδὲ θάλασσα: 847). An elemental battle between fire and water is taking place, in which fire proves stronger. Homeric epic evidences a parallel tradition in the battle between Hephaistos and the river Xanthos (*Il*. 21.352–67). As Zeus gains mastery of the dragon, his thunderbolts have all of Typhoeus' heads in flames (ἀμφὶ δὲ πάσας / ἔπρεσε θεσπεσίας κεφαλὰς δεινοῖο πελώρου: 855–6). In his climactic defeat, a flame shoots up from the thunderstruck dragon (φλὸξ δὲ κεραυνωθέντος ἀπέσσυτο τοῖο ἄνακτος: 859).

The same motifs also occur in the battle between the Olympians and the Titans, as Caldwell notes: 'The cosmic repercussions of the battle [on *Il*. 839–52]

land and sea (869–80). These rush about in the form of an indistinct whirlwind (ἀέλλη) bringing pain (πῆμα) to man … Typhoeus' winds operate as a kind of "black hole" in Zeus' order, an ungovernable and undifferentiated force that persists even into the present time'; (*ibid*., 368); and 'The Typhonic winds … reaffirm man's fragile place in the world and dependence on Zeus' beneficial rule' (*ibid*., 369).

44. For recent discussion, see Louden, '*Retrospective Prophecy*'.

45. Collins, *The Combat Myth in the Book of Revelation*, 29.

duplicate in detail the description of the Titanomachy.'[46] Caldwell emphasizes that in both episodes, 'the earth is set on fire (859–67, 693–700)'.[47] In the earlier episode as well, there is an emphasis on the extreme heat's effect on the oceans: 'and all the earth was seething, and Ocean's streams' (ἔζεε δὲ χθὼν πᾶσα καὶ Ὠκεανοῖο ῥέεθρα: 695). As the myth develops over the next few centuries, the fire erupting from Typhoeus becomes equated with volcanic activity, with later authors locating the imprisoned Typhoeus under Mount Aetna (Aeschylus, *Prometheus* 363–8; Pindar, *Pythian* 1.17ff.).[48]

In Revelation 20, a series of acts, with motifs found in the *Theogony*'s defeats of the Titans and Typhoeus, leads to the final defeat of the dragon. First, in 19, the white horse and its rider take the beast, who is leading the kings of earth against him, and his prophet, and throw them into the burning lake (19:11-20). An angel, 'with the keys to the abyss', then seizes the dragon, puts him in chains and hurls him into an abyss (καὶ ἐκράτησεν τὸν δράκοντα … καὶ ἔβαλεν αὐτὸν εἰς τὴν ἄβυσσον, καὶ ἔκλεισεν καὶ ἐσφράγισεν ἐπάνω αὐτοῦ: 20:2-3). This corresponds to Hesiod's depiction of Typhoeus, and the Titans, hurled into Tartarus. The *Theogony* clearly expresses the notion of something along the lines of an abyss, 'a great chasm, and he would not reach the floor even after a whole year' (χάσμα μέγ', οὐδέ κε πάντα τελέσφορον εἰς ἐνιαυτὸν / οὖδας ἵκοιτ': 740–41). West argues that it may be a true abyss, 'or the chasm is bottomless, as in Euripides'.[49]

After having been confined in the abyss, chained for 1,000 years, the dragon is released (20:3, 7–9), and leads nations astray (πλανῆσαι) throughout the earth, mustering forces for a war. Though Typhoeus has no such direct interaction with mortals, Hesiod's account of how he is the source of dangerous winds, which plague humanity forever after, is a smaller, less theological, version of the same motif.

The dragon's increased degree of interaction in mortals' affairs prompts a second conflict (Rev. 20:10-15). This time, the dragon's defeat is even closer to Hesiod's account of Typhoeus: 'And fire came down from heaven and consumed them' (καὶ κατέβη πῦρ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ κατέφαγεν αὐτούς: 20:9) parallels Zeus defeating Typhoeus with thunderbolts prompting worldwide conflagration. 'And the devil (the dragon) was hurled into the lake of fire and sulfur' (καὶ ὁ διάβολος … ἐβλήθη εἰς τὴν λίμνην τοῦ πυρὸς καὶ θείου: 20:10). As is the case with some of the defeated Titans, the Beast, his prophet, and perhaps the dragon, are to be tortured in the burning lake for all time (καὶ βασανισθήσονται ἡμέρας καὶ νυκτὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων: 20:10). In both Hesiod and Revelation,

46. Richard S. Caldwell, *Hesiod's Theogony: Translated, with Introduction, Commentary, and Interpretive Essay* (Cambridge: Focus Classical Library, 1987), 73.

47. *Ibid*.

48. It is even more explicit in versions closer to the time of Rev., such as Ovid: *degravat Aetna caput; sub qua resupinus harenas / eiectat flammamque ferox vomit ore Typhoeus* (*Metamorphoses* 5.352–3); cf. Apollodorus, ἐξ οὗ μέχρι δεῦρό φασιν ἀπὸ τῶν βληθέντων κεραυνῶν γίνεσθαι πυρὸς ἀναφυσήματα, *The Library*, 1.6.3.

49. West, *Hesiod: Theogony*, 364.

the dragons' defeats conclude with the same irony: each fire-breathing dragon is defeated by a superior wielder of fiery weapons.

In a final parallel, both myths feature a second instance of the motif of one immortal swallowing the offspring of another, but with a different agent, and now with the motif employed in a *positive* sense: to ensure the stability of the new divine reign. Near the end of the *Theogony*, Zeus learns, from Gaia and Ouranos, that his first wife, Mêtis, the goddess of cunning intelligence, is destined to give birth to wily, powerful children (886–900). Learning this only after she is pregnant, and resolved to break the chain of succession that had gone from Ouranos to Kronos, then Kronos to himself, Zeus swallows the pregnant Mêtis. As Lopéz-Ruiz notes, 'In Hesiod the secondary reuse and elaboration of this motif … Zeus swallows his pregnant wife … in order to prevent the birth of a successor and always have her moral guidance.'[50] Forever after, Zeus will have cunning intelligence within him.

To appreciate the swallowing motif in Revelation 12, we need to consider the surprising use of a personified Gê. Hesiod's 'Gaia', Mother Earth, has a significant role throughout the *Theogony*.[51] Her interventions, at several stages of the myth, are crucial for Zeus' ultimate victory. For instance, Gaia advises Rhea about how to evade Kronos' designs in order to give birth to Zeus safely.[52] Hesiod's Gaia contracts to Gê in New Testament Greek, but surprisingly maintains a corresponding role in Revelation 12. Only here, in the entire Bible,[53] is Earth personified, as in Hesiod.[54] In Revelation 12, when the dragon pursues the 'woman', 'after the woman the serpent threw water from his mouth like a river, so that she would be borne away by it' (Καὶ ἔβαλεν ὁ ὄφις ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ ὀπίσω τῆς γυναικὸς ὕδωρ ὡς ποταμόν, ἵνα αὐτὴν ποταμοφόρητον ποιήσῃ: 12:15). Gê intervenes to help her: 'Gê helped the woman, Gê opened her mouth and swallowed down the flood that the dragon had hurled from its mouth' (καὶ ἐβοήθησεν ἡ γῆ τῇ γυναικὶ, καὶ ἤνοιξεν ἡ γῆ τὸ στόμα καὶ κατέπιεν τὸν ποταμὸν ὃν ἔβαλεν ὁ δράκων ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ: 12:16). As in Hesiod, where Gaia intervenes in order to frustrate Kronos (494), here Revelation's Gê intervenes to frustrate his counterpart, the dragon. While it is not exactly the same motif, since what Gê here swallows is not offspring, it is the exact equivalent of the same Greek compound verb (κατέπιεν: Rev. 12:16; κατέπινε: *Theogony* 467,

50. López-Ruiz, *When the Gods Were Born*, 142.
51. See Caldwell's assessment, 'The capricious Gaia', since, while she intervenes repeatedly to aid Zeus' cause in most of the *Theogony*, she also gives birth to Typhoeus (821). Caldwell, *Hesiod's Theogony*, 74.
52. Gaia serves a similar role, providing guidance and prophetic advice to Prometheus, in Aeschylus' *Prometheus*, 211–20.
53. There are partial parallels in Num. 16:32, 26:10; cf. Deut. 11:6, Ps. 106:16-18. But these differ in key respects, and are less similar to Gê in Rev. 12 than Gaia's usual role in Hesiod's poem, and more like *Theogony* 183–4, where Gaia receives the bloody drops that spring from Ouranos.
54. Gaia is personified, or acts as an agent, throughout the *Theogony*: 126–39, 147, 158–83, 238, 463, 469–86, 493–4, 505, 626–8, 821, [858, 861,] 884, 891.

473). The author could have depicted her intervention in a number of other ways, but has opted for having a personified Earth's swallowing to defeat the myth's principal antagonist, as in Hesiod.

How should we interpret these parallels? Revelation has several Old Testament passages to use as models for depictions of the dragon. Psalm 74:14 briefly mentions Yahweh breaking 'the head of the dragon' (τὰς κεφαλὰς τοῦ δράκοντος). Isaiah 27:1 depicts Yahweh smiting the dragon with his sword. Other relevant passages (Ps. 18 = 2 Sam. 22, Ps. 89:9, Isa. 51:9-10; Job 9:8, 13, 41:10-13) also refer to versions of the combat myth, but none of these passages has the specific motifs and elements we have observed. The initial focus on a heavenly choir, with whom the narrator interacts, already begins to evoke paradigms not fully at home in Old Testament myth. Several other motifs, in their determined polytheism, are simply outside typical Old Testament conception: the goddess about to give birth, the war in heaven and, perhaps most unusual of all, the personification of Earth, acting as an agent, intervening. We know that the author of Revelation is open to employing elements from Greco-Roman culture, given the consensus that the Beast alludes to the Emperor Nero,[55] as Collins notes: 'The adoption of the Nero legend in Revelation 13 and 17 is a further example of the way the apocalyptist drew upon the non-Jewish culture of his environment.'[56]

Hesiod's *Theogony* not only has all of the same motifs, but also uses them in largely the same sequence. Written in the same language as is Revelation, Hesiod's text remained well known throughout the Greco-Roman world, at the time of Revelation's composition. Early Christians were educated in a Greco-Roman rhetorical tradition: Quintilian, *Insitutio Oratoria* 10.1.52, lists Hesiod among models to be imitated. Sandnes documents even Basil of Caeserea citing Hesiod.[57] The New Testament authors lived in a largely Hellenic world, and knew the Old Testament only in the Greek Septuagint.

At one level, then, parallels between the *Theogony* and Revelation could be indirect, part of a larger cultural background that would, consciously or unconsciously, have been absorbed by educated inhabitants of the larger Greek-speaking world. We might think of composers and songwriters who have absorbed a musical phrase, re-employing it without realizing its prominence in a previous work. On the other hand, filmmakers constantly draw on iconic scenes from, say, Hitchcock or Kubrick films – on the one hand, alluding to them, on the other, refashioning them in different guises for their own purposes. Audience members, with differing levels of competency, may or may not recognize the use of such 'subtexts'. To my mind, the correspondences we have traced are too specific to be indirect, and suggest a relationship more like the second model, reflecting some intentionality.

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55. Cf. A. Y. Collins, *The Combat Myth in the Book of Revelation*, 174–86; J. J. Collins, *The Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism*, 389, 395; and Louden, '*Retrospective Prophecy*'.
56. Collins, *The Combat Myth in the Book of Revelation*, 187.
57. Karl Olav Sandnes, *The Challenge of Homer: School, Pagan Poets and Early Christianity*, Library of New Testament Studies (London: T&T Clark, 2009), 36, 180, 183.

But why might the *Theogony* serve as a source or model for Revelation? The series of correspondences we are considering helps explain some of the oddities of Revelation. Consider Michael's role in defeating the dragon the first time (12:7-9). As a named individual immortal, separate from God, he is unprecedented from the perspective of the Old and New Testaments. He instantiates the surprisingly polytheistic texture of Revelation. Comparison with the *Theogony* suggests he corresponds, in part, to Heracles, a hero whose great exploits are parallel to those of his father, Zeus (as are Michael's to Christ's), and in part to Athena, the immortal most concerned with executing Zeus' larger designs, and with victory in war. Gê's unexpected role and intervention come into clearer focus placed in context with the *Theogony*'s treatment of Gaia.

At the core of the *Theogony* is the succession myth, three generations of father-to-son succession, Ouranos, to Kronos, to Zeus.[58] Hesiod persuasively provides multiple answers to the question of why Zeus is the *final* sky father. López-Ruiz notes the adaptability of succession myths:

> [T]his kind of narrative travelled easily across neighboring ethnic and linguistic frontiers and was adapted and transformed to fit prevailing trends and interpretations of coexisting myths, whether they were 'old' or 'new,' Greek or 'foreign.' The narrative schema of a succession of gods provided a 'grid' into which foreign and local elements could be easily adapted to specific theological and literary ends.[59]

At the core of Christianity, as highlighted by Revelation and its correspondence with the *Theogony*, is a succession myth (though, to my knowledge, rarely discussed as such): the centre of the religion is transferred from Father to Son. Revelation presents a new version of the traditional mythic type, in which the Son not only peacefully coexists with the Father, but seems coregent with him, unlike the *Theogony* and its predecessors.

Since Christianity often positions itself as a corrective against earlier religions, I suggest that Revelation *consciously* appropriates structures from Hesiod's narrative, and does so with a specific agenda. In the symbolic, coded language that Revelation employs, *Satan* could refer to the god of another religion, which, from a Judeo-Christian perspective, cannot be the true god. Zeus himself could be figured as, or equated with, Satan, as Pagels notes.[60] Thus, Revelation 12's dragon, Satan, about to devour the offspring of the goddess, could also allude to Zeus' swallowing the goddess Mêtis, pregnant with Athena. Milton clearly made a reading like this in *Paradise Lost* 2.648–870 (esp. 749–67), where Sin is depicted as a goddess, having been born from Satan's head, just as Athena springs from Zeus at *Theogony* 924–6 (cf. the *Homeric Hymn to Athena*, 28.4–9). In other words, Milton endows his Satan with one of

58. Cf. López-Ruiz, *When the Gods Were Born*, *passim*; Goslin, 'Hesiod's Typhonomachy', 354.
59. López-Ruiz, *When the Gods Were Born*, 128–9.
60. Pagels, *Revelations: Visions, Prophecy, and Politics*, 11.

Zeus' most well-known acts. In this sense, Revelation's correspondences can be interpreted as 'correcting' the earlier myths that had these motifs, now showing, from a Judeo-Christian perspective, the 'true' form of the several mythic types.

Revelation's correspondences with the *Theogony* demonstrate the traditional nature of much of Revelation, but also reveal a startling syncretism at work in biblical narrative.[61] By putting it in an ancient context, its original context of Hellenized Imperial Rome, we can see that much of it is composed almost entirely of traditional motifs, many of which are so common as even to be found in well-known narratives outside of the Bible. We should understand Revelation's use of Hesiod as deliberate, I suggest, meant to be perceived by some of its intended audience, who would then see Revelation as a 'correction' of Hesiod's own narrative.

Acknowledgment

I should like to thank Dr Adela Yarbro Collins for her comments on an earlier draft.

61. Cf. Louden, *Homer's* Odyssey *and the Near East*, 320–23, on Gen. 37, 39–46 as written in a dialogic relationship with the *Odyssey*.

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